ピアノの森 15

一色まこと

モーニング KC 1675

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The Perfect World of KAI

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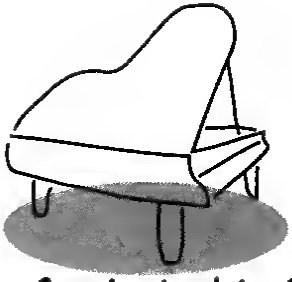
ISSHIKI Makoto

The Perfect World of KAI

15



The Perfect World of KAI

15

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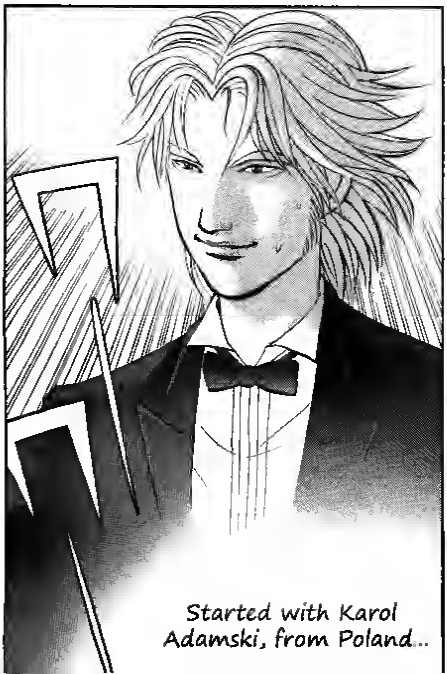
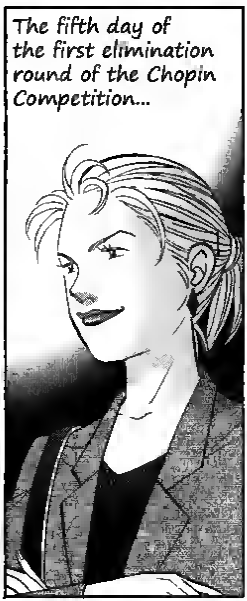
Lonely Escape

Chapter 129


Started with Karol Adamski, from Poland...

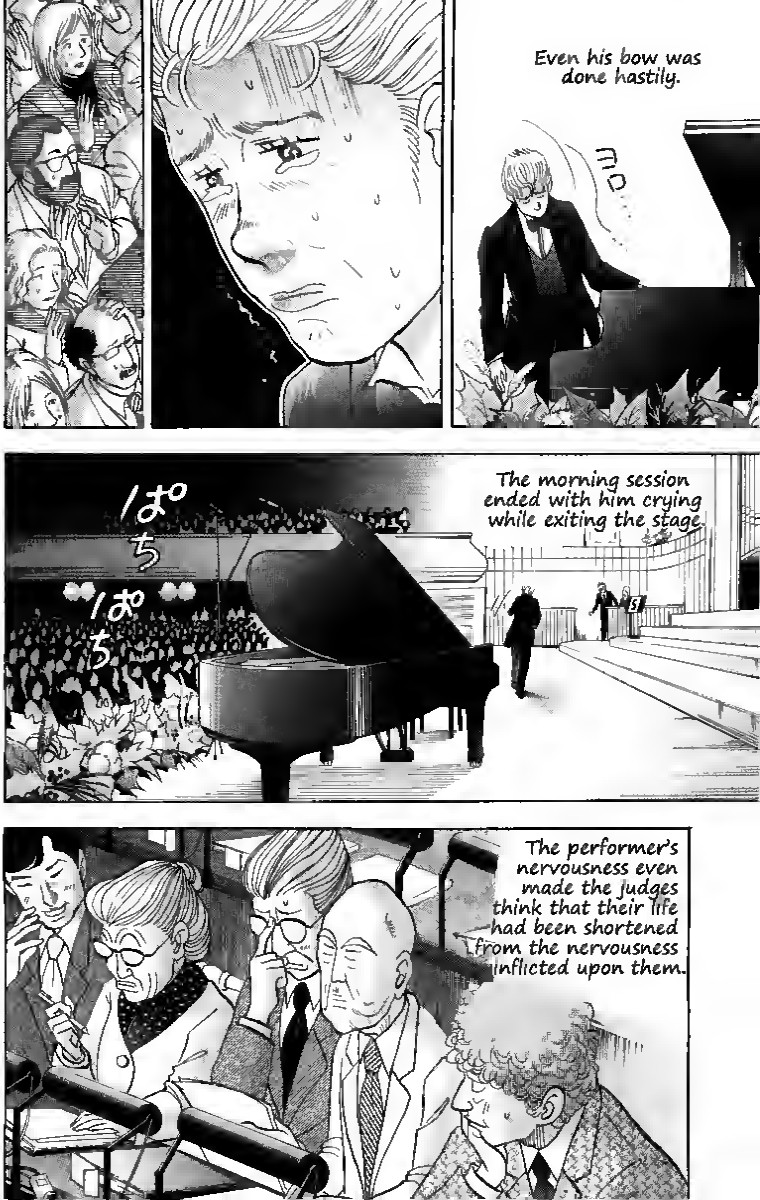

The fifth day of the first elimination round of the Chopin Competition...

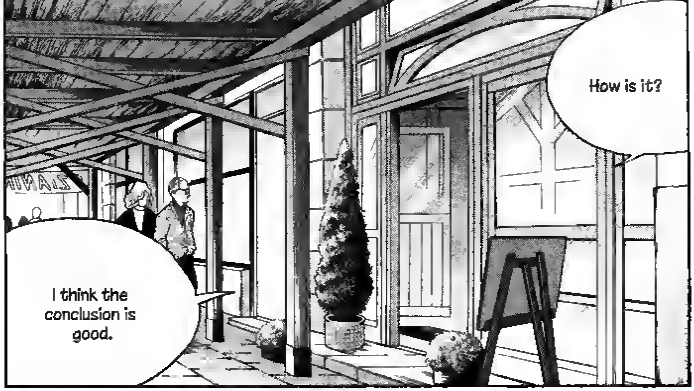
Followed by Amamiya Syuhei from Japan .

Chang Woo An from Korea...

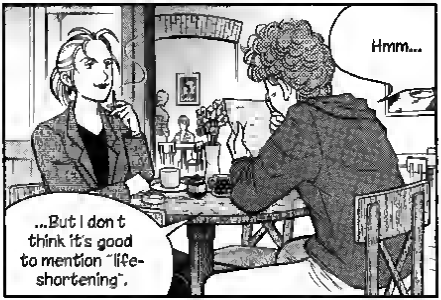
The fourth, Luca Eyre Austin from Italy..
The next few performers could also be elites.
...Due to immense stress and nervousness, he made a huge mistake at the start of the Etude.
After that, he was unable to get back on track.

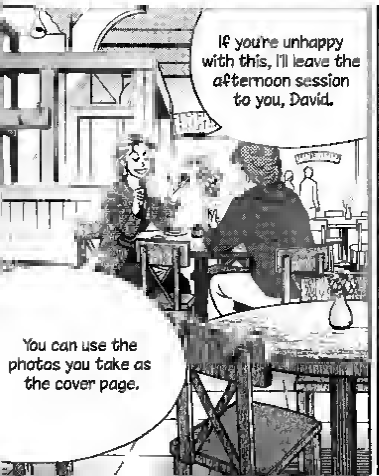
The performance was so terrible that people even thought of stopping him from continuing.

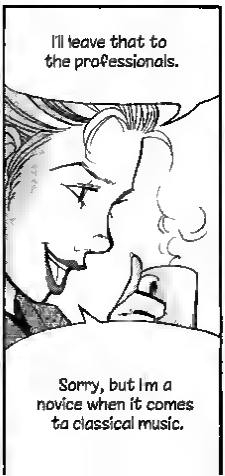

Even his bow was done hastily.
ﾏﾀﾞ…
The morning session ended with him crying while exiting the stage.
ぽち
ぽち
The performer's nervousness even made the judges think that their life had been shortened from the nervousness inflicted upon them.

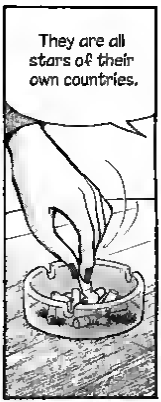

How is it?
I think the conclusion is good.

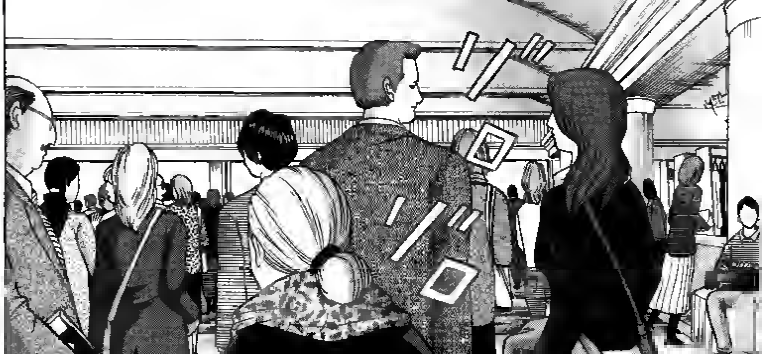
Victoria,
You should describe the first three performers in greater detail.


Hmm...
...But I don't think it's good to mention "life-shortening".


If you're unhappy with this, I'll leave the afternoon session to you, David.
You can use the photos you take as the cover page.


I'll leave that to the professionals.
Sorry, but I'm a novice when it comes to classical music.


They are all stars of their own countries.

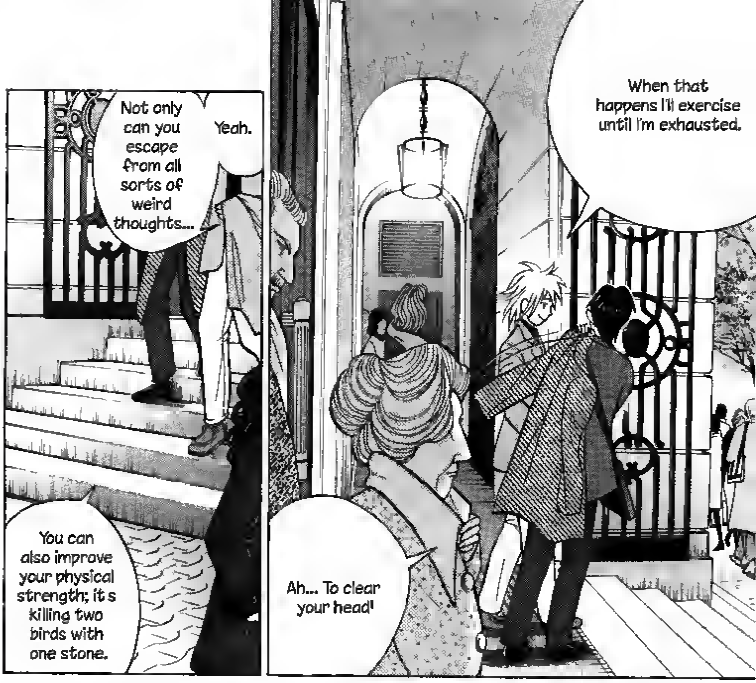


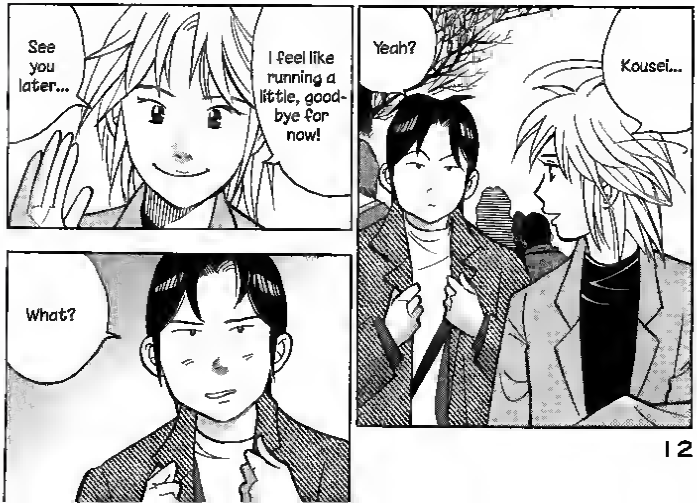
Kousei...
Kousei, are you okay?

Ughh, my life has been shortened by 5 years.
Listening to that terrible performance reminded me of myself.

Have some water.
Thanks.

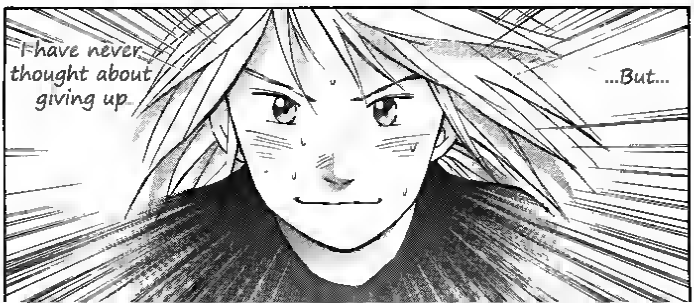
Kai, aren't you afraid?
Just thinking about standing on that stage makes me feel so scared. Who knows, I might have done worse than that Italian guy.
Maybe it's a good thing I was eliminated during the preliminaries.
The first half was terrible...
Yeah...
Especially when I think of the preliminaries.
Of course I am,
I understand you what you mean.
But thinking of the beginning makes me really scared.
But didn't you correct it during the latter part?


When that happens I'll exercise until I'm exhausted.
Ah... To clear your head!
Yeah.
Not only can you escape from all sorts of weird thoughts...
You can also improve your physical strength; it's killing two birds with one stone.


Kousei...
Yeah?
I feel like running a little, good-bye for now!
See you later...
What?

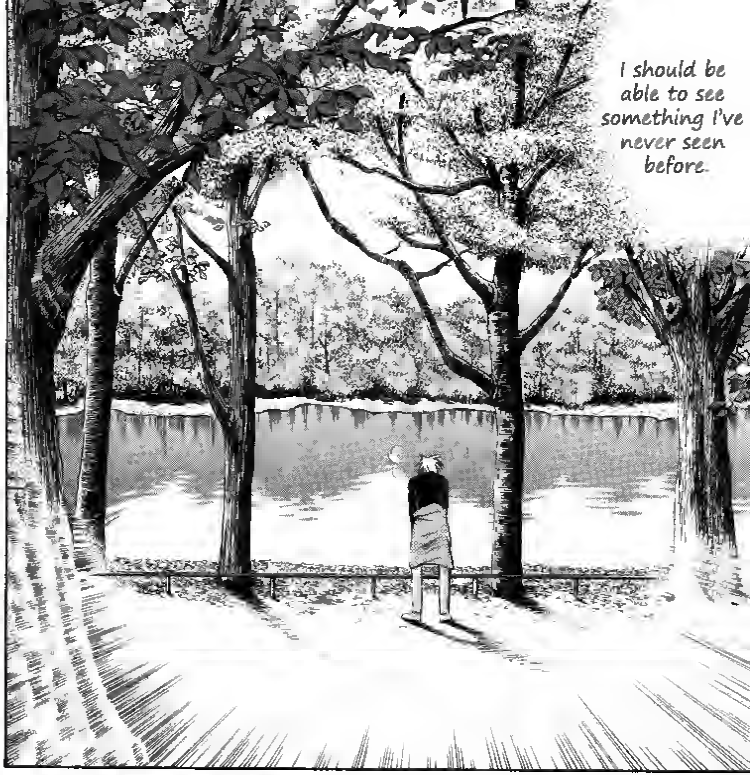
Eh?!
AH!
Ah...
You got scared thinking about it!

It's impossible to not be scared
...Feel stressed!
Impossible to not...
But...
...To join the competition
Why I had agreed...
...Why...
I can't help but remember...


I have never thought about giving up
...But...

I want to do it!
I can definitely do it.

No matter what the results may be,
As long as I put forth my greatest effort...


I should be able to see something I've never seen before.

はあ
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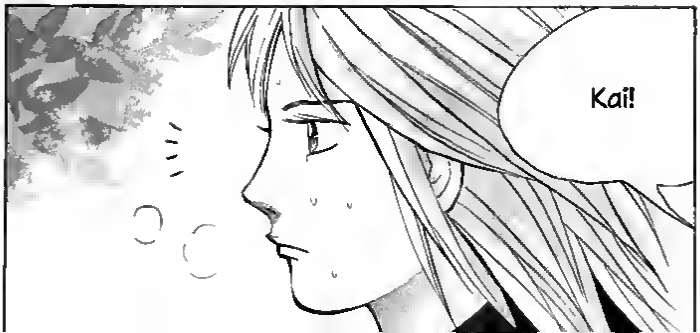
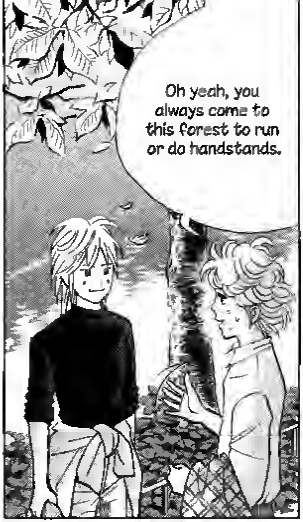
はあ
Ajino once said...

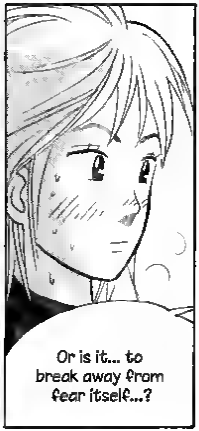
...Is different from what you will see when climbing the mountain,
And what you will see at the mountain peak.
The scenery you see at the foot of the mountain...
As long as you climb it, you will definitely see a view you have never seen before.
So if you don't climb it,...
No...
...You'll want to climb a higher mountain
Ahaha...
Then will it all end after climbing that mountain?
はあ
はあ
はあ

I want to see the scenery
.I have never seen before

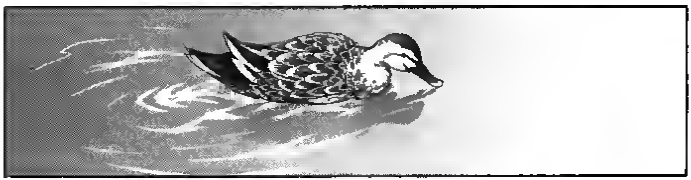

Kai!

You run really fast, Kai!
It was hard to catch up with you.
Le...
...Lech Szymonowski...


Oh yeah, you always come to this forest to run or do handstands.


Or is it... to break away from fear itself...?

Do you run because you want to escape the things that scare you?



No,
I run to encourage myself.
Lonely Escape END

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PIANO NO MORI

by ISSHIKI Makoto
一色まこと

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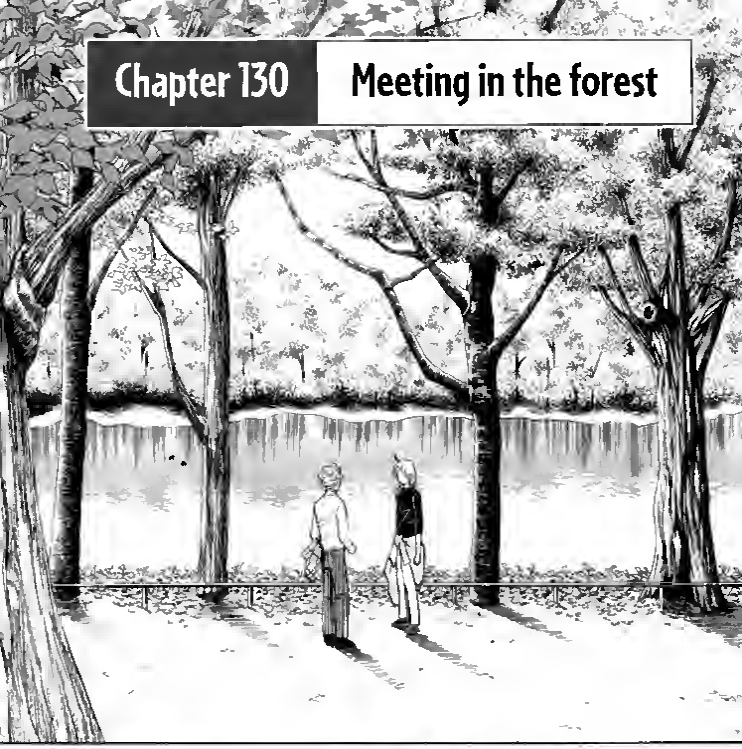
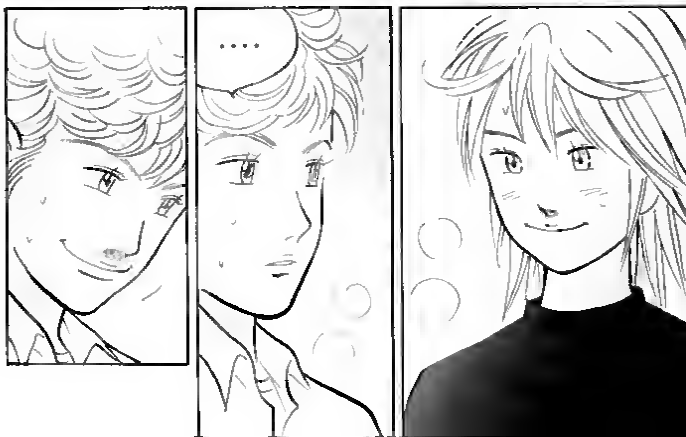
Chapter 130 Meeting in the forest





Yeah!
Just thinking about it makes my heart beat faster.
Oh yeah, there are only 4 more days till the competition ends.
It'll be Kai's turn soon!
What about Lech? You must be relieved after the performance.
I recall that your performance was on the second day, right?
I know what you mean...
?
Na...
I have not performed yet.

But, my performance was changed to the first slot on the last day.
Could it be, at this moment...
Eh?
That day... I was extremely unwell so I couldn't perform.
Ah-You scared me!
I thought you forfeited.
Hi!
... Which is the one before Kai's slat.
Eh?
Then, isn't that great!
Lech said that performing on the last day is the best time...

H-h-how could that happen...
Events like these can't be controlled...
Even though it was an accident, in the end, it was a blessing in disguise.
Are you trying to say that I fell sick on purpose in order to perform on the last day?
Huh?
Eh?
フッ
An accident you say...
Kai, I'm able to control my body condition.

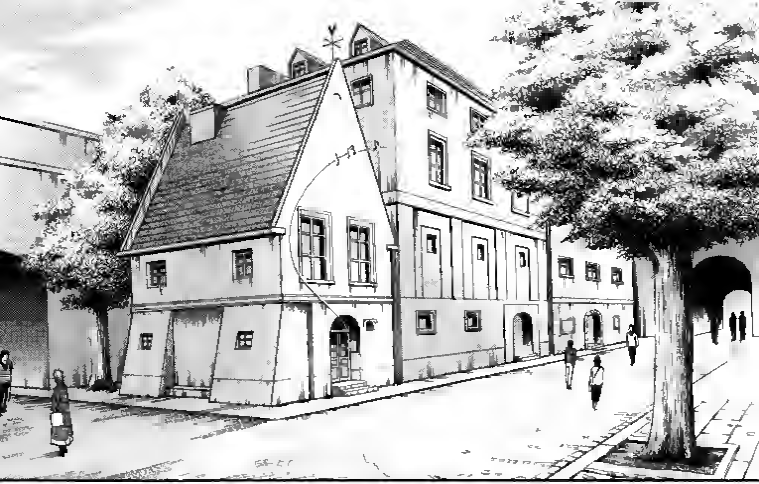
Huh?
-- Lech Szymanowski...
to the Polish pianist whom I met in this garden, 'Chopin's Forest'.
Ahaha... Just kidding, it was a lie of course!
Kai is really easy to bluff.
This inconceivable guy...
This elusive guy says he can read the mind of people along with being the 'master of this forest'...
...

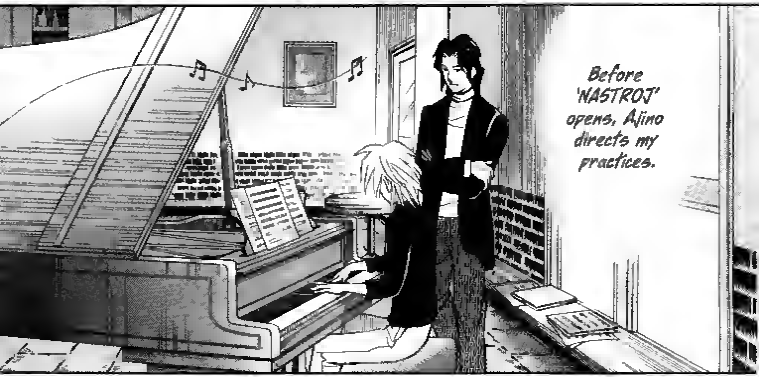
Really?
I listened to today's morning session as well.
Ever since I met him, I started to feel uncomfortable.
Oh...
I just went to hear Chang Woo An's performance.
Of course!
That was my main purpose.
So, did you hear Shuhei Amamiya's performance?
What do you think about Shuhei Amamiya's performance?
Considering he's the youngest, he has already set great standards for the Japanese...

To me, Amamiya's playing is one of my favorites.
Really?
Hmmm, that's great.
Indeed.
He is really outstanding.
His playing is indeed good...
However, it isn't grand enough.
Yeah.
Really great.
How should I explain... Although his willpower towards playing the piano is very strong, it only extends to one person...
His playing has depth but lacks breadth... Maybe it's because he's still young that it can't be helped.

Ah! This won't do!
Criticizing others will curse you!
It's very hard to express in words but doesn't Kai feel it?
Not really.
People have different ways of feeling things.
C-curse?!
It should be left to the critics...
If I must talk about it, I should only do so after giving up the piano! ... Dad has always scolded me for this.
Liar-
The curse will drag down my playing skills
Worst case scenario would be a hand injury

I ought to go home and practice offsetting the sin of criticizing others.
I can't stay any longer!
Sorry, Kai! I must go!
So long.
Understood!
Then, good luck to you too!
Seems to truly believe his father's words.
This inconceivable spirit...
By who?
Curse...?




Before 'NASTROJ' opens, Ajino directs my practices.

Since the day Ajino came to Poland...
This has become my morning class.

There was a participant who could not make it for his original slot as he was sick...
Kai's performance has been changed to second slot.
Oh yeah! The bureau contacted me this morning...
I was again told the same by Ajino.
Despite hearing it from the actual person...
I guess so...
はは
I guess so... You're so unreliable.
Is it okay?
I accepted the change in schedule because I didn't think it would affect us a lot.

NASTRO
After the shop opens, I will help out...
Then go to bed after checking my emails.
Ah... It's an email from Sae-chan.
I would clean the shop...
I wake up early in the morning and after washing up...

But to utilize my 8 hours of practice time...
And only stay in the forest for an hour.
I will have to take a breather.

Pant
Pant
Pant

Bok...
...
A boxer ...?
Pant
Pant
Meeting in the forest END

Pant
Pant
Pant
Pant
Box...

A boxer ...?

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PIANO NO MORI

by ISSHIKI Makoto
一色まこと

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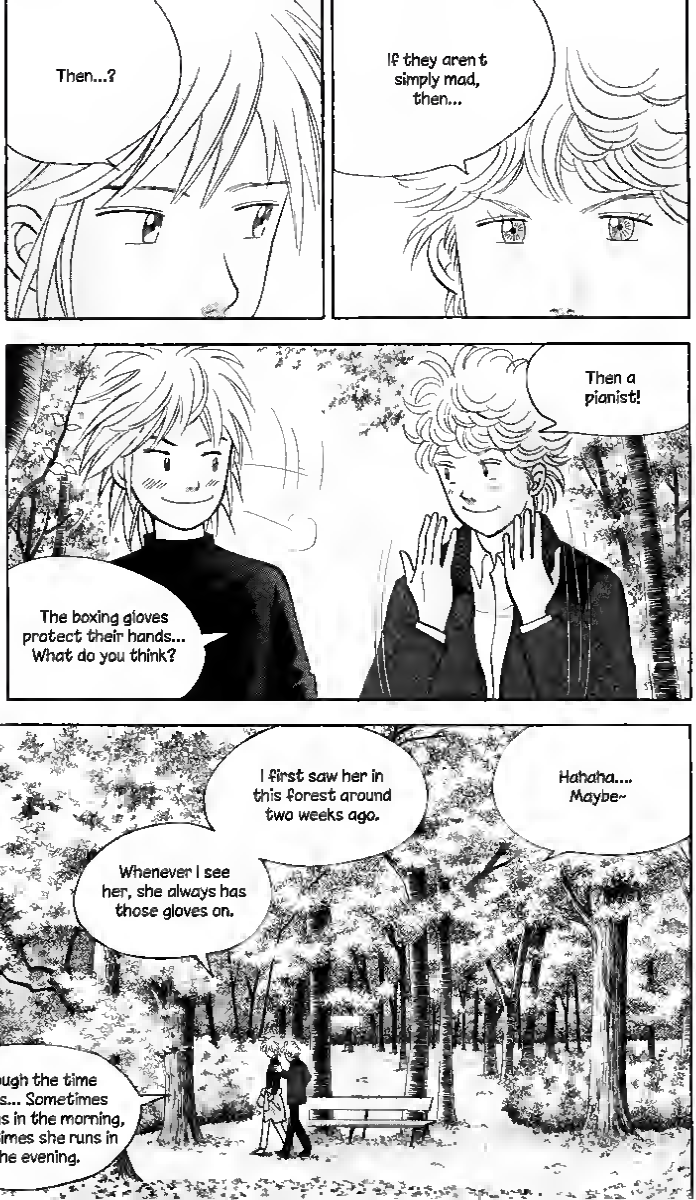
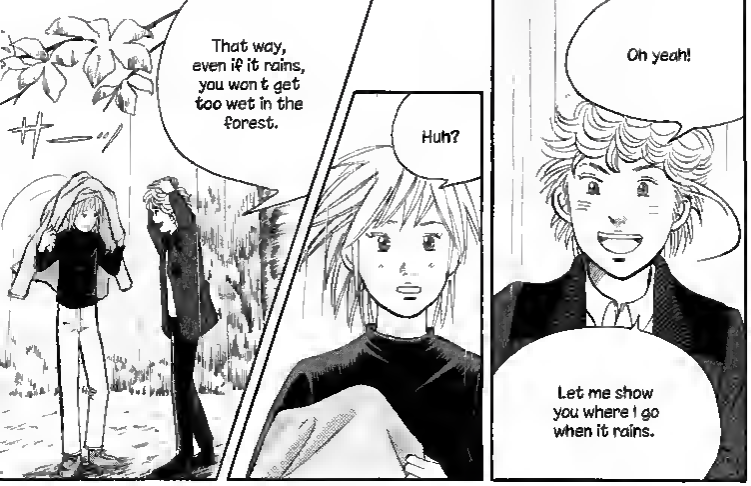
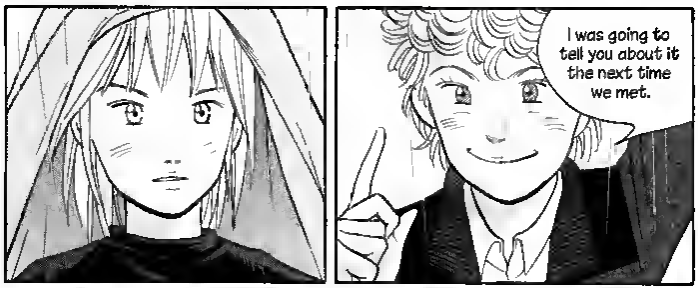
Beautiful Granados
Chapter 131

I don't think that's a boxer.
Gyah!
While some boxers wear gloves or bandage their hands
I doubt they'd run with boxing gloves on.
Lech, don't scare me like that...
Then... Who would?
I don't know...


Then...?
If they aren't simply mad, then...
Then a pianist!
The boxing gloves protect their hands... What do you think?
I first saw her in this forest around two weeks ago.
Hahaha.... Maybe~
Whenever I see her, she always has those gloves on.
Though the time varies... Sometimes she runs in the morning, sometimes she runs in the evening.

I told you already, I'm the [Master of the forest].
I've heard that enough times...
BREATH
It's like you live in this forest...
Nothing goes on here that you don't know about.
Though I still don't get what the gloves are for...
But anyhow, she's weird.
Ahahaha.
When I'm not sleeping or playing the piano, I'm always here!
Even on rainy days!
!
drip
drip


That way, even if it rains, you won't get too wet in the forest.
Huh?
Oh yeah!
Let me show you where I go when it rains.


I was going to tell you about it the next time we met.

I felt that wherever Lech was taking me
While I didn't really have time to spend idly

Was probably similar to the place that I love most of all.

Look!
This is the only place that's different.

I never realized.
That there was a place like this here...

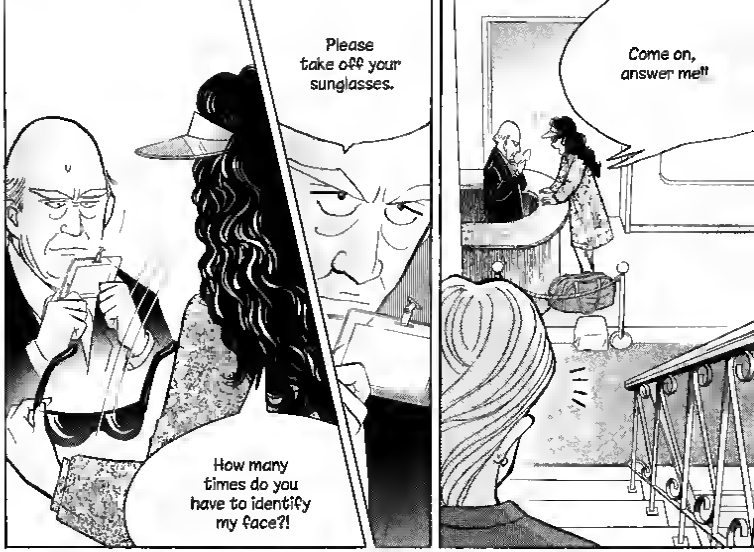
This forest is so huge, even if you spent a year, you still wouldn't find this place!

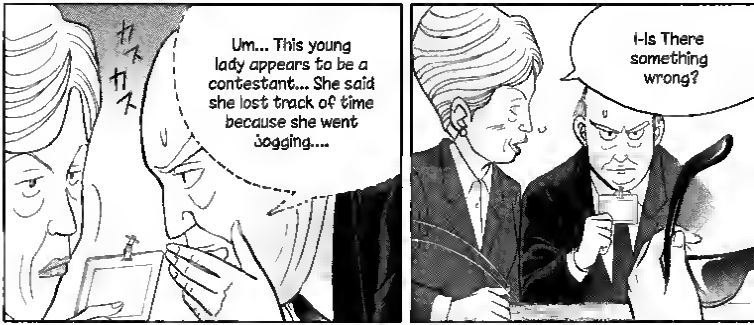
Protects this place.
This tree
No worries, we're friends!
Thank you, Lech!
Do you like it?
Thank you for bringing me here.
Yes! I do.
It's similar to the place where I spent my childhood.

The place where the Forest Piano was.
Ahahaha...
Huh? Did you grow up overseas?
This place is just like... [The Forest End]

Oh yeah! Kai!
Bye~
Yeah!
Don't catch a cold, Lech!
It'll be our turn in three days.
Good luck!
I came across my favorite place in [Chopin Forest]
On the 6th day of the first round of the competition...

So?
SALA KONCERTOWA
SALA KONCERTOWA
Can we use it, or not?


Please take off your sunglasses.
How many times do you have to identify my face?!
Come on, answer me!!

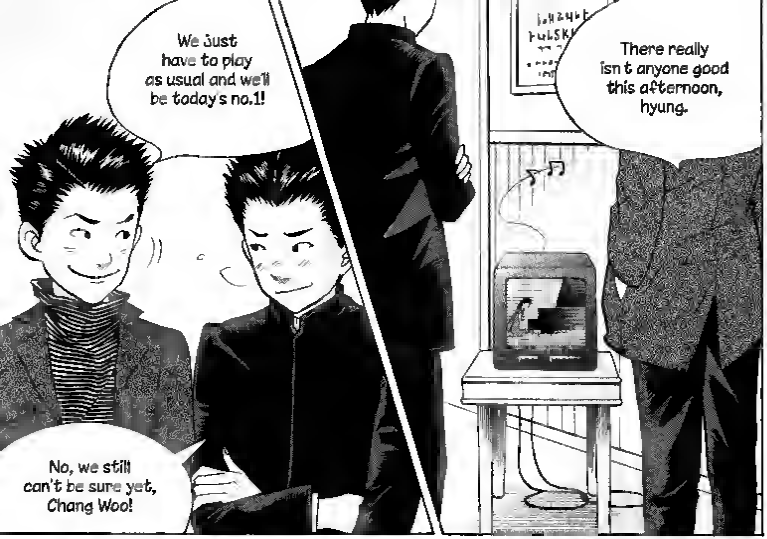

カスカス
Um... This young lady appears to be a contestant... She said she lost track of time because she went jogging....
I-Is There something wrong?

カスカス
Although it's still too early, she's insisting on using the contestants' rest area.
And if she doesn't get at least three hours of sleep, she can't get into the right mindset to play the piano...
カス カス

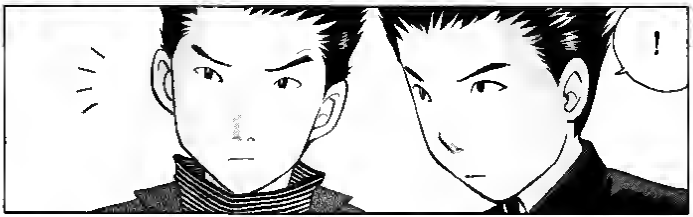
So can I use it or not!?
I already told you, I don't have time for this!
She says she doesn't have time to go back to the hotel...
You and YOU!
If I don't play up to my potential, it'll be on your heads!!
I understand!
Please follow me.
I....
I'll file a complaint!
On both of you and the rest of Poland!!

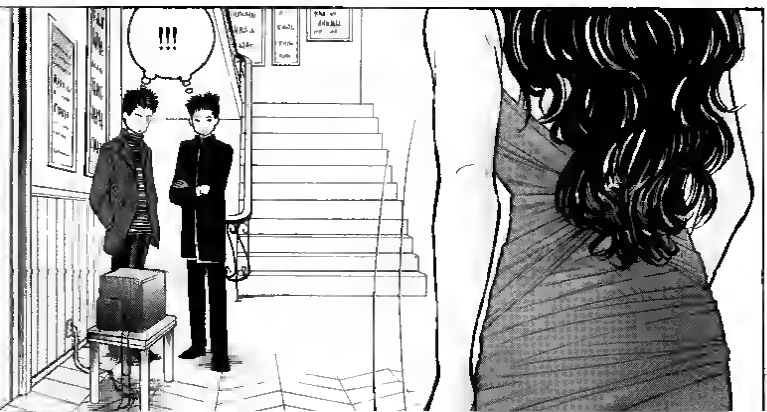
No.
And that shouldn't be the attitude of someone asking for a favor.
Hey! Is there a place to shower?
And take off those sunglasses.
Such a slow reply... Stupid old man!

Kawai

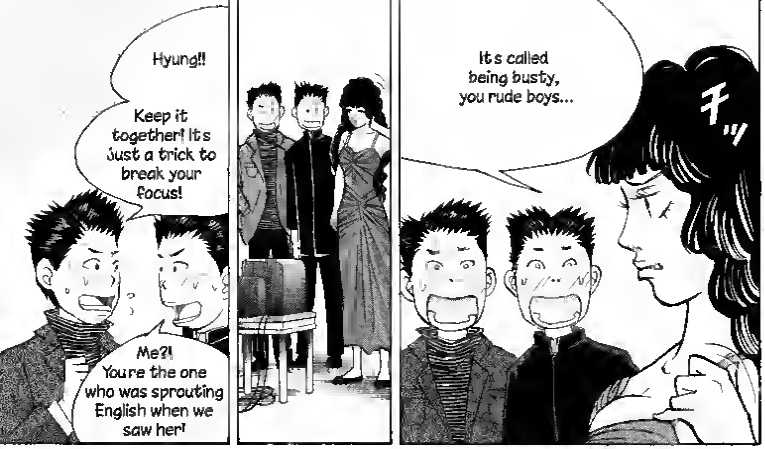

There really isn't anyone good this afternoon, hyung.
We just have to play as usual and we'll be today's no.1!
No, we still can't be sure yet, Chang Woo!

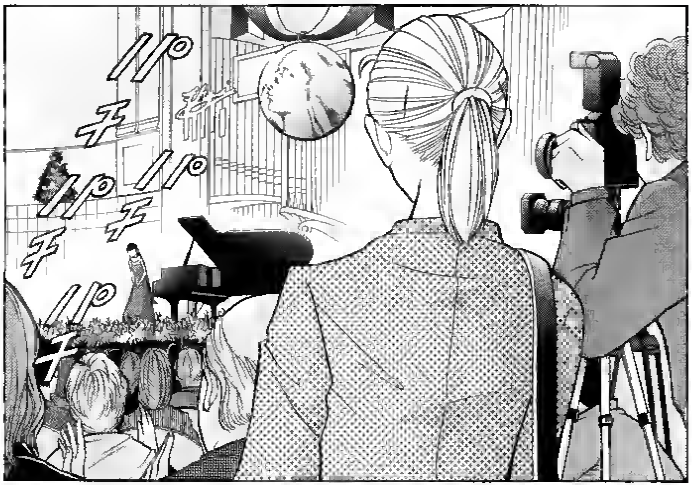
T/N: "HYUNG" IS KOREAN FOR BROTHER.



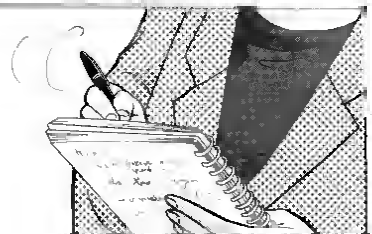


Those.... So revealing...
Hyung!! Don't fall under her spell!! Look at how developed the muscles on her arms are!
Her boobs may look like boobs, but I bet they're 100% muscle too!
ギロ
Stop joking around!! Look closely and tell me, do they really look like muscle to you? Huh?!

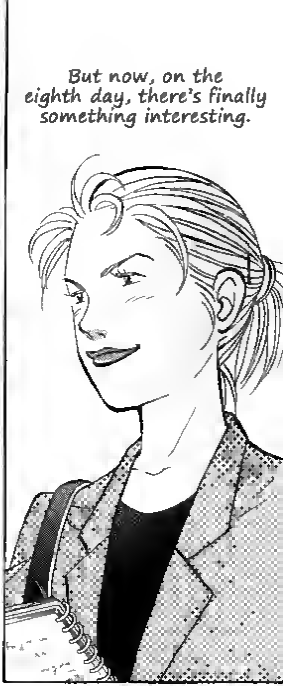

Hyung!!
Keep it together! It's just a trick to break your focus!
Me?! You're the one who was sprouting English when we saw her!
It's called being busty, you rude boys...



We've crossed the sixth and seventh days of the first round of the competition and there still haven't been any particularly impressive people ...



Argentina's Aguila Gelanados gave a strong performance to match her physique.


But now, on the eighth day, there's finally something interesting.

Although very feminine, she shows no traces of weakness or seduction with her straight-forward personality. Her performance was filled with charisma

キャア

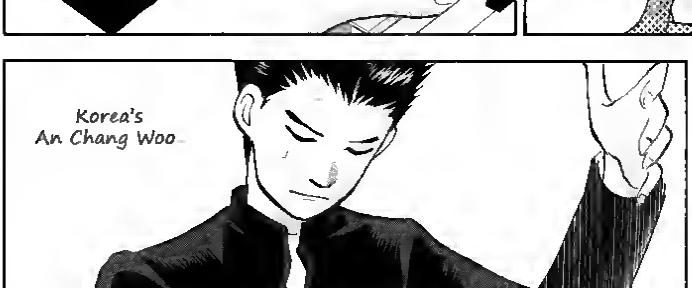
Following her was
America's Daniel Hempt
His personality and peculiar
style of playing...

and unsurprisingly,
he passed out as soon
as his performance
had ended.

Made people
worry that he may
collapse halfway...

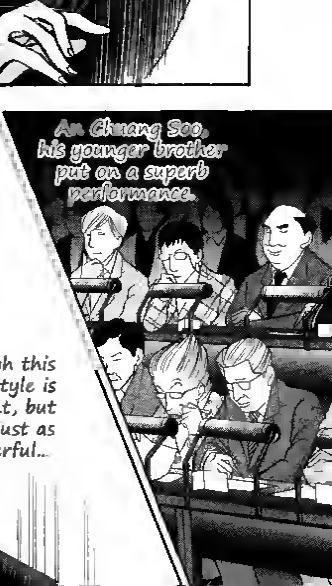
Finally, it was the last contestant of the day... the elder of the two twins...

HAHAHAHA....
Victoria!!

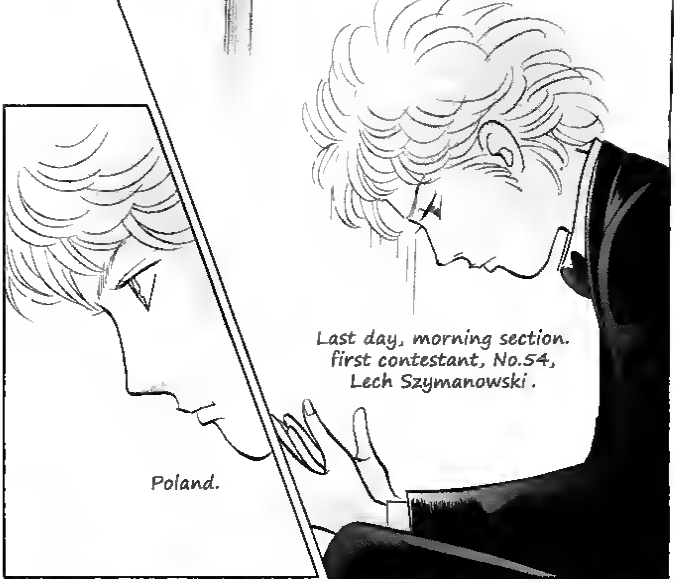

Korea's An Chang Woo

He should be able to make it to the finals.

Although this twin's style is different, but it was just as wonderful..


An Chang Soo, his younger brother put on a superb performance.

B-But we can't rest tomorrow, Victoria!
Tomorrow is the last day of this leg of the competition. If we don't see it through to the end, we won't be able to make our news report!
Ugh, that was tiring...
The 9th and last day of the 1st round


Last day, morning section.
first contestant, No.54,
Lech Szymanowski.
Poland.

No. 37,
Kai Ichinose.
Japan.

The second
contestant.
Meeting in the forest END

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PIANO NO MORI

by ISSHIKI Makoto
一色まこと

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Piano no Mori ch 131

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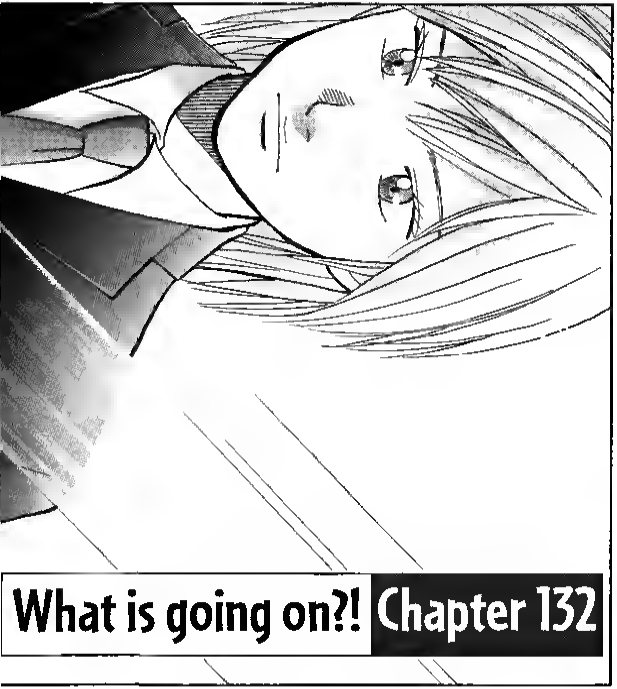
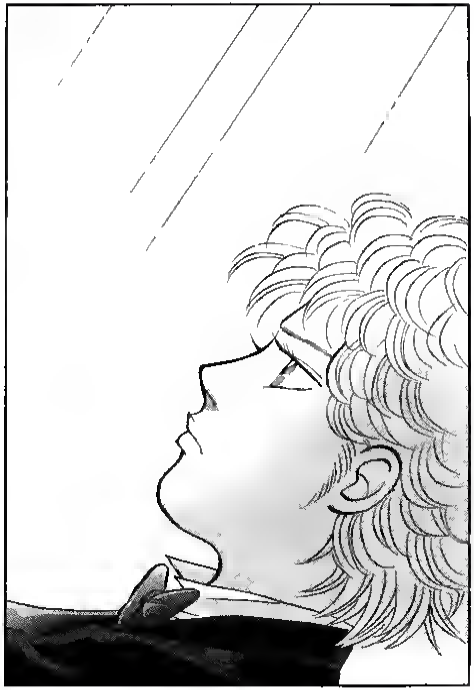


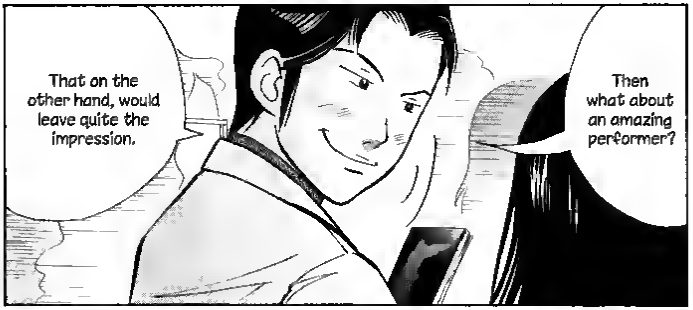
What is going on?! Chapter 132



The 9th and last day of the 1st round.

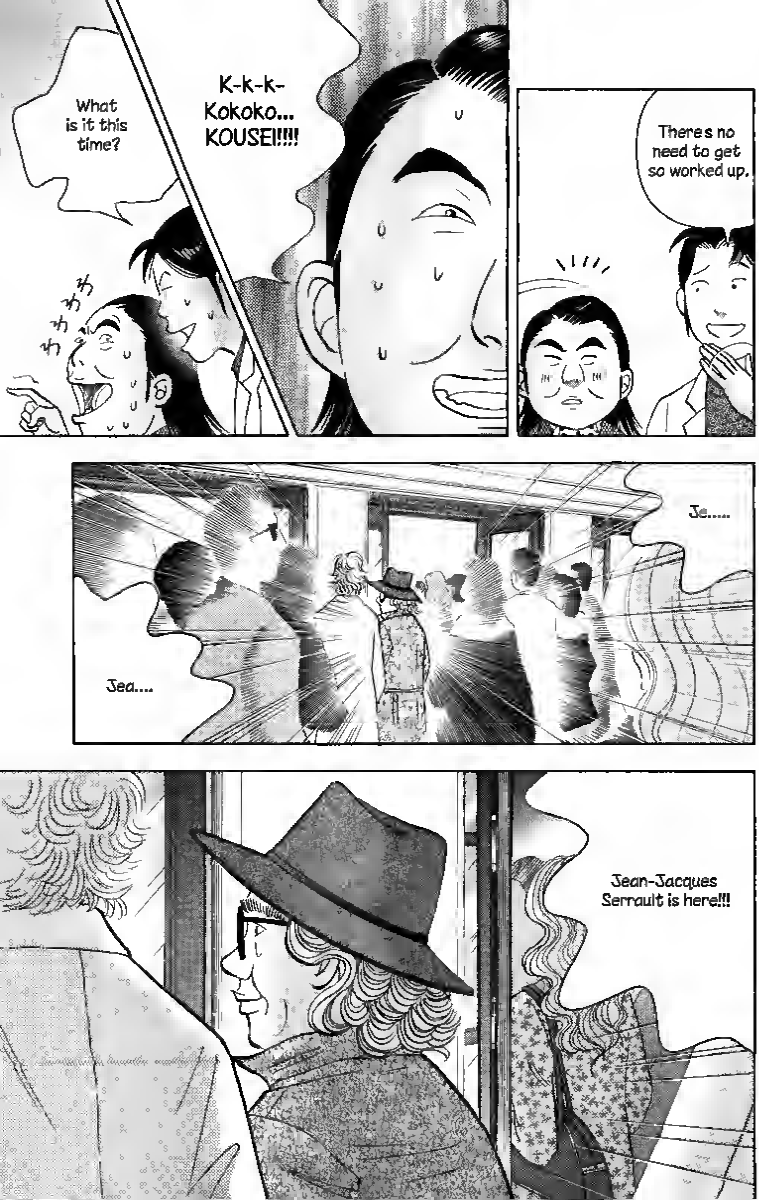
Wow... The judges must be exhausted after nine straight days of judging...

If I were a Judge, I'd be pretty pissed if I heard a bad piece while I'm tired...
I think...
You know, most candidates think it's easier to leave a lasting impression on the Judges during the last day....


That on the other hand, would leave quite the impression.
Then what about an amazing performer?

Eh?
Is he good?
Now that I think about it, your friend Ichinose Kai is performing today, right?
You'd have to be pretty good to do that!
But since the Judges already heard so many...

Ah!
As if I'd tell you he's the dark horse of the competition...
Just listen closely when he gets on stage, sensei.
Ah...Ahaha... He's alright.
It's Shuhei Amamiya!
Even his father, Yoichirou, is here!
And that's...


What is it this time?
K-k-k-Kokoko... KOUSEI!!!!
わわわわ
There's no need to get so worked up.
Je.....
Sea....
Jean-Jacques Serrault is here!!!

Model A
Model B
Model C
Model D
Model E
His tricks are useless against me!
No matter how hard he tries to disguise himself, I've grasped his technique and hence can see through all of his disguises!

Am I missing something?
And only for the last day...

B-B-But Sairo... Why is he here?!

Ah! If it isn't Tamakaji Sensei!!

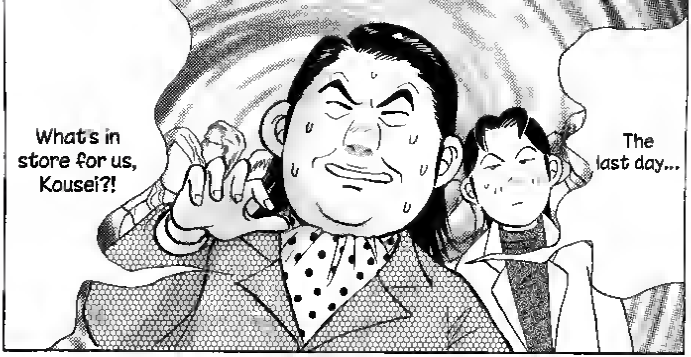
Its possible that it may only start at midnight...
Isn't the announcement at night?

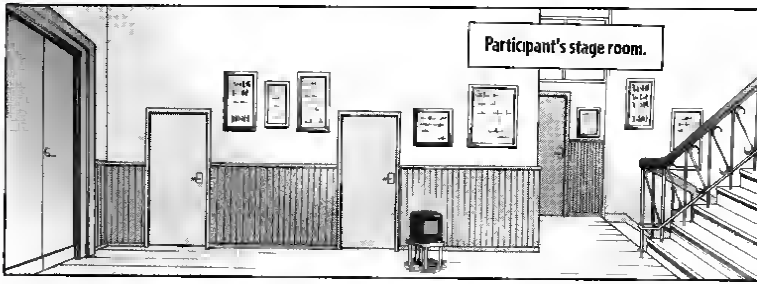
I mean... It's the last day of the first round... So they should be announcing the results today.
There's no need to be so surprised...

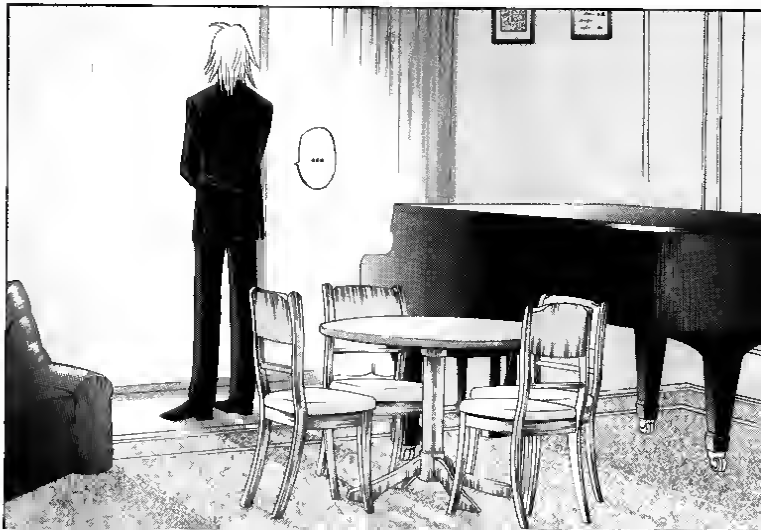
Saga Takeshi
The nuisance also known as the most influential man in the Japanese music industry.
Sensei...
Sa-Saga
I've been here since the first day and I never noticed you!
This kid is a generation younger than me, yet openly mocks me... the bastard.
I'm going to get some coffee....
Is it because of that 18K gold essence face mask you use?
Ah... It's been a long time, sensei! You still look as young as ever!

Huh?
KOUSEI!!
W-What is it this time...? Here, drink this and calm down.
What's going on today?!
Look... Over there!
But I had to stand in queue for so long...
This isn't the time for coffee! Come on!!

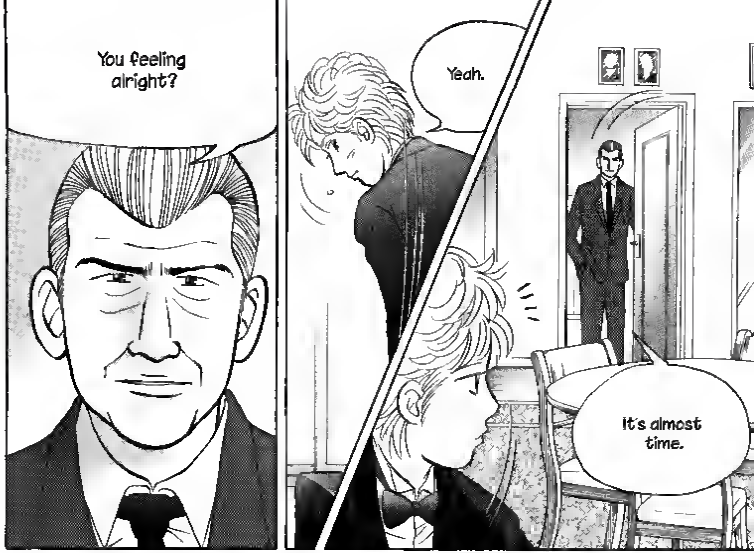
Even Wei Pang is here!!
What...!?
And he's even putting up with all of his fans... And that must mean...
He's renowned for only appearing on the day of his performance.
Something's going on today!!
Something...

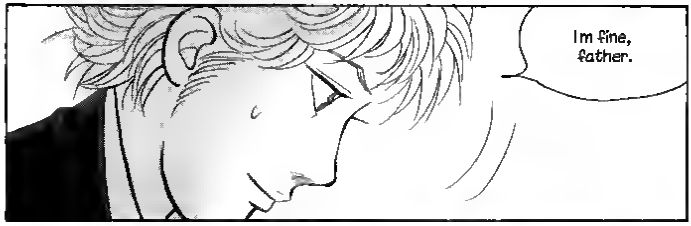

What's in store for us, Kousei?!
The last day...


Participant's stage room.


...

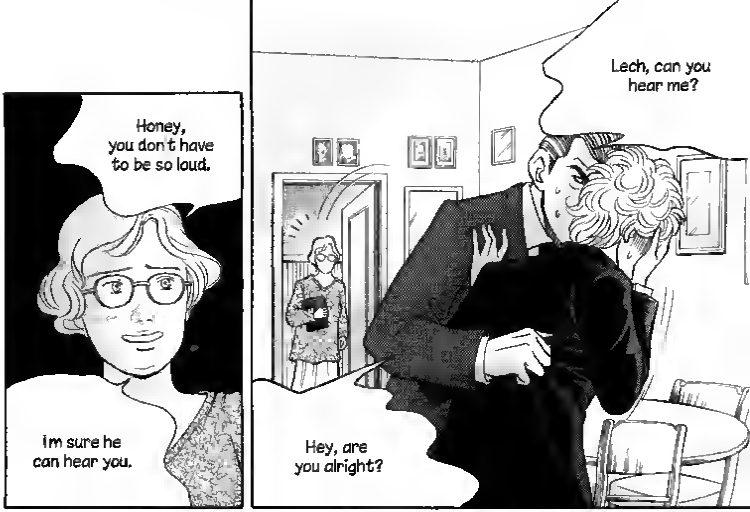
It's finally here!
Finally...
...
It's here!

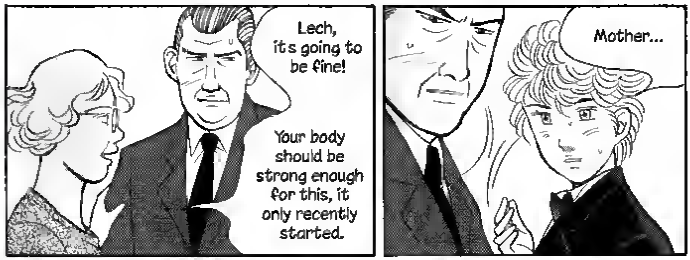

You feeling alright?
Yeah.
It's almost time.

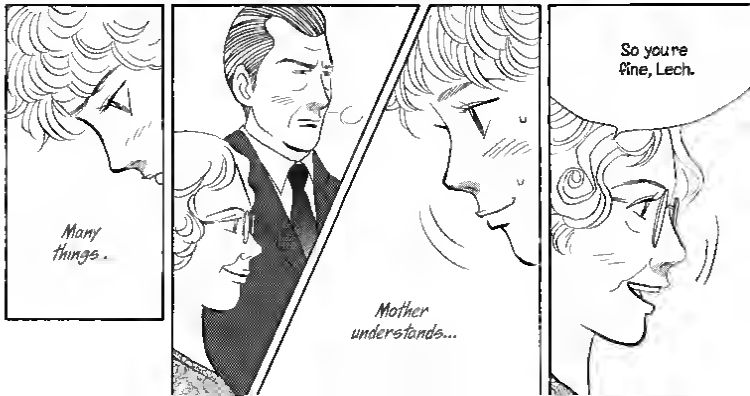

I'm fine, father.

Yeah...
pant
pant
Oh?
Are you sure?

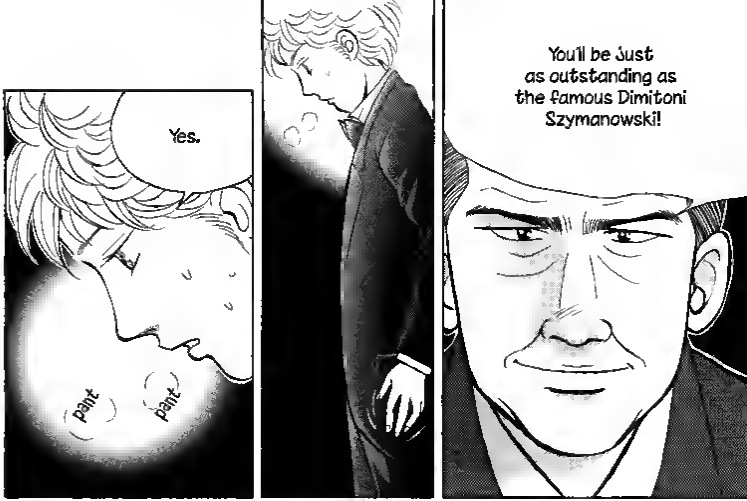
Help me, Amelia!!!
Help me...
Help...
pant
pant
Lech, you know... If you mess this up, there's no going back!
Now's not the time to be sick.
Amelia!
It's alright, Lech!
It's going to be ok!
I'll be right beside you!

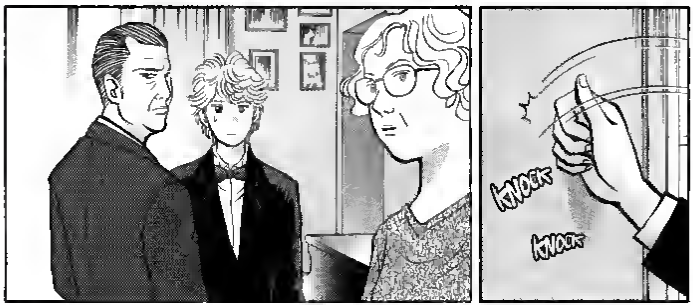

Honey, you don't have to be so loud.
I'm sure he can hear you.
Lech, can you hear me?
Hey, are you alright?


Lech, it's going to be fine!
Your body should be strong enough for this, it only recently started.
Mother...


Many things.
Mother understands...
So you're fine, Lech.

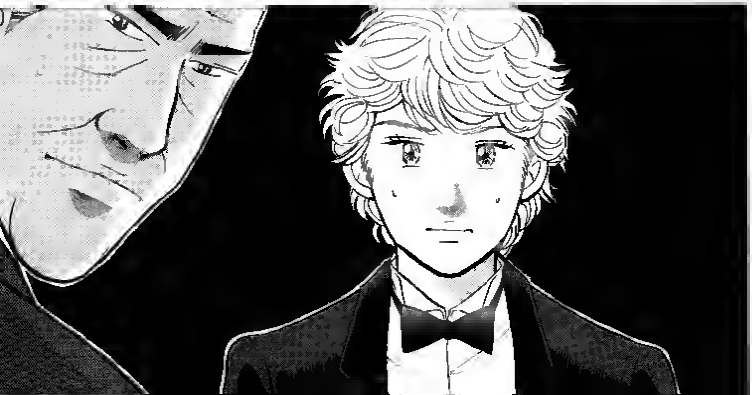
Yes...
This is it.
Oh, I've brought something that might help...
Ah, so you brought it.
Lech!
It's your grandfather's picture.
Put this in your pocket.
I'm sure a famous pianist like him would watch over his own grandson's performance.


You'll be just as outstanding as the famous Dimitoni Szymanowski!
Yes.
pant
pant


KNOCK
KNOCK

Lech Szymanowski,
It's almost time, please get ready.
What is going on?! END

Mr. Lech Szymanowski,
It's about time. Please get ready.



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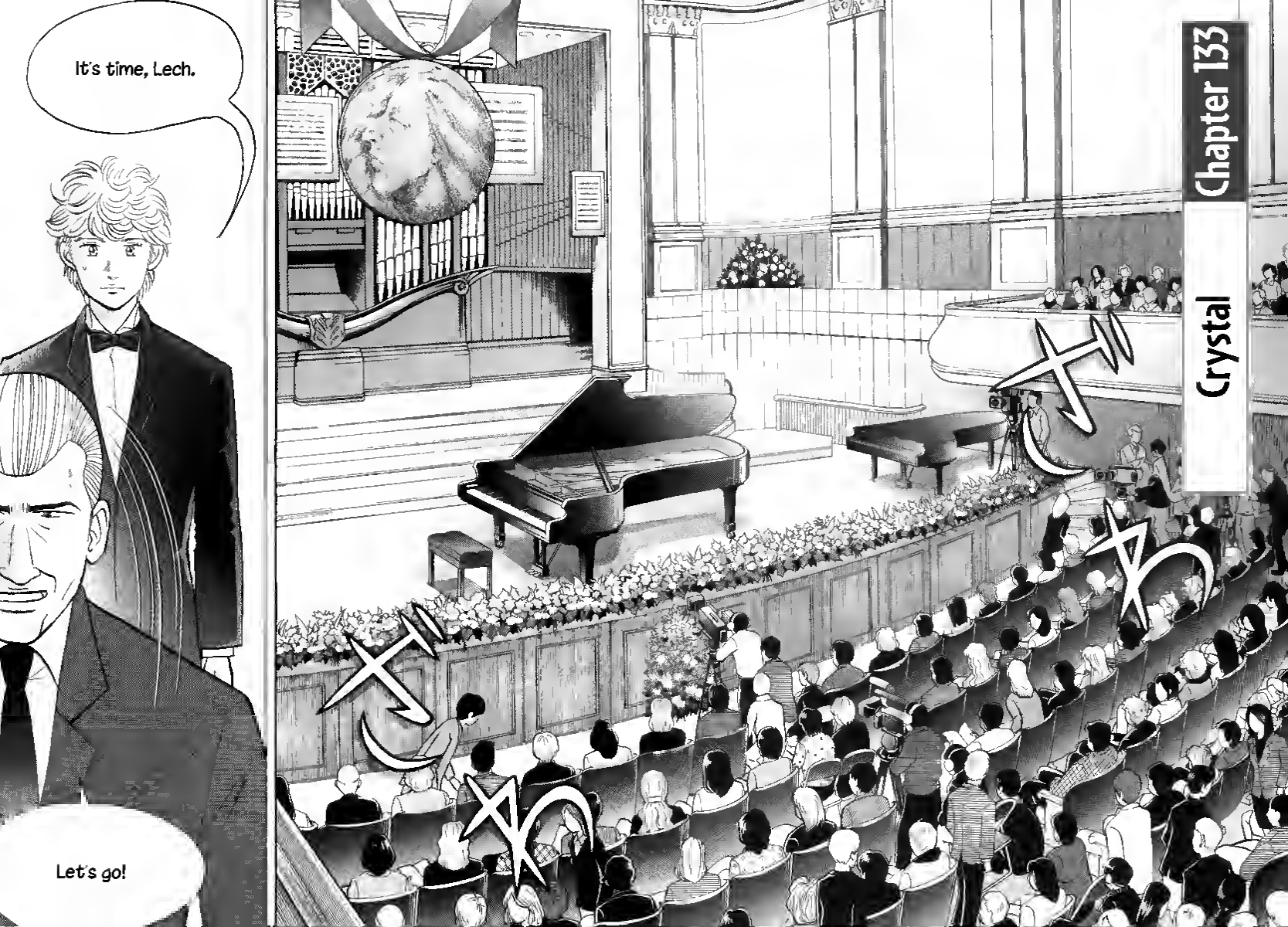
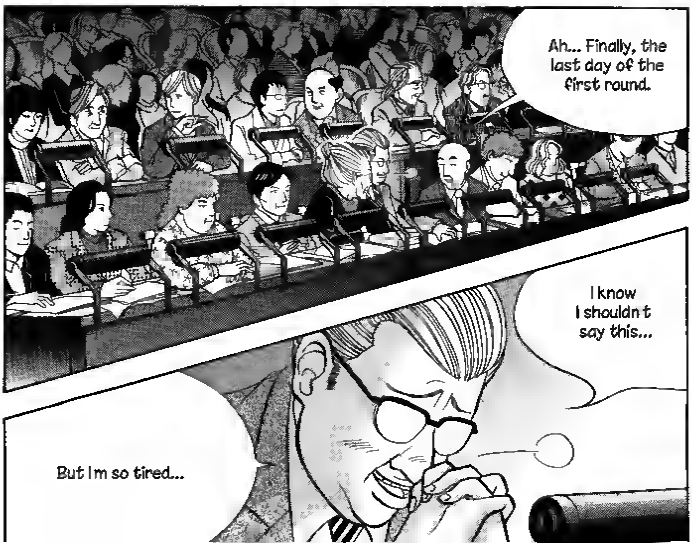

It's time, Lech.
Let's go!
Chapter 133
Crystal

A...
Amelia...


Ah... Finally, the last day of the first round.
I know I shouldn't say this...
But I'm so tired...

10 left, huh...
Phew...
11, to be exact...
At least after today, we'll have a break before the next round.
So far, we've heard 70 contestants play for 45 minutes each...
71, to be exact.
Lech ... 45 minutes...
CONCERT HALL

Lech Szymanowski?
Yeah...
Just focus for 45 minutes!
Yes...
...
These are the songs, in order, that you intend to play, right?
54
No, he's fine.
Are you ok? You don't look very well...

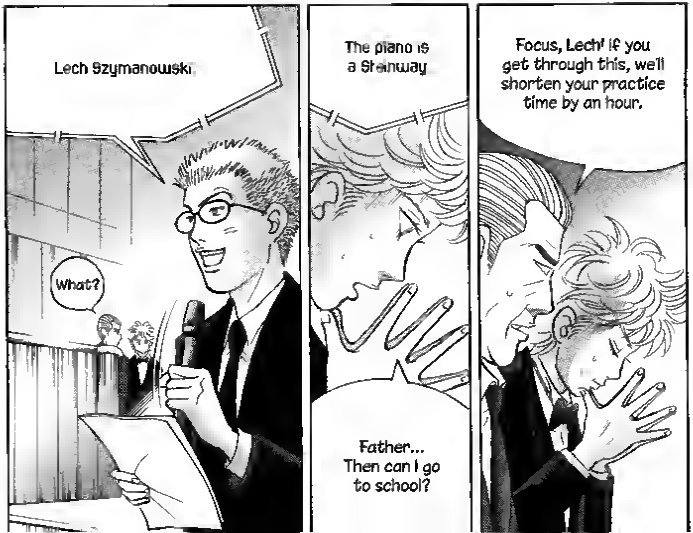
The Polish contestants didn't stand out much this year...
Well, the most interesting one so far has been that Adamski kid...
Ah! Today's first contestant is Polish.
Yes; Lech Szymanowski.
Lech Szymanowski... He's Dimintoni Szymanowski's grandson, you know.
Huh? Dimintoni's...
...
If the Polish candidates don't step up their game, the whole of Poland will be in shame ..
True. But keep it down...
He was a magnificent pianist...
His death was a great loss.

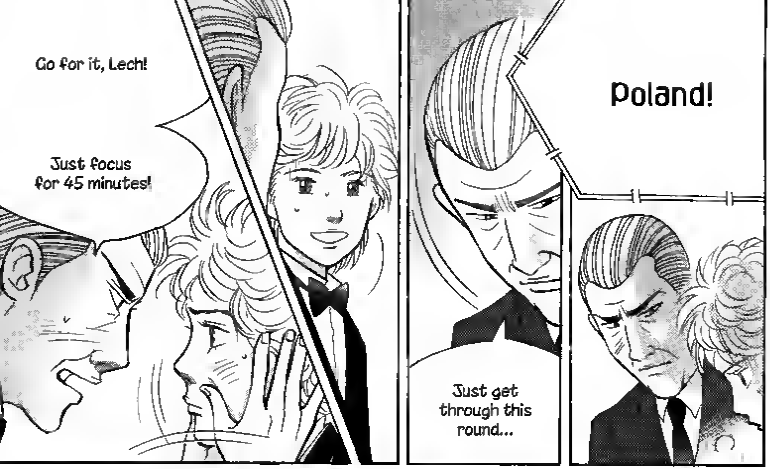
I knew him as well. He was so stubborn that no organisation would accept him.
I heard he tutored his son himself...
He had a son, but sadly he didn't inherit his father's talent, so he only became a piano teacher...
Hmm... I remember he also had a granddaughter.
The one that... he was really proud of...
Then let's hope that his talent has passed onto his grandson.
54
Amelia Szymanowski.
Ah...

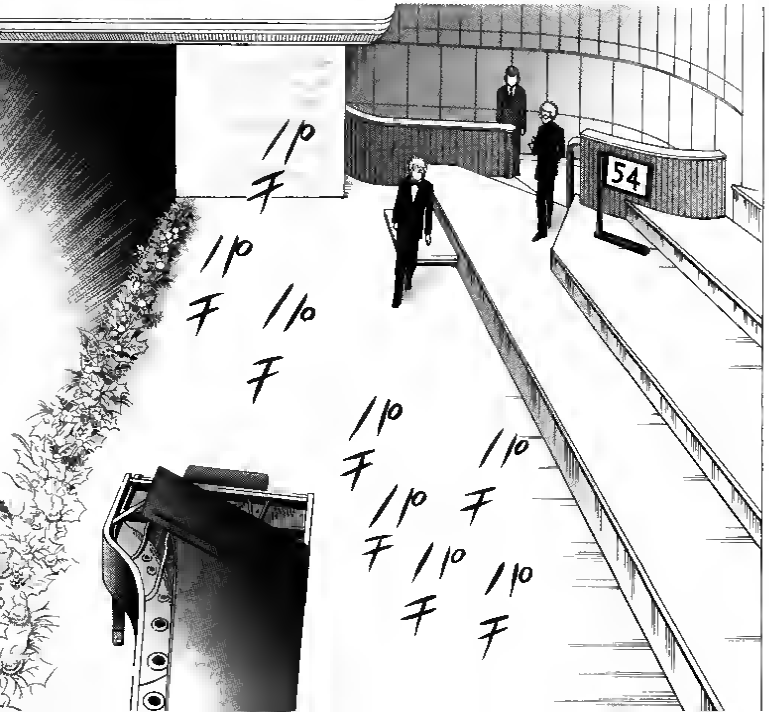
His elder sister by a year...
54
Lech SZYMANOWSKI
Polska - Poland
Amelia Szymanowski?
Her brother chases after her, normaliy placing fourth or fifth in competitions... Nothing astounding...
She was a cute girl brought into the industry through big competitions...
I've heard rumours of her death... But others say she's still alive... Any accurate information about her is sealed by that stubborn father of hers.
She was in an accident 5 or 6 years ago and has been in a coma ever since... Poor girl...
What about Amelia?

But regardless... She won't be able to play the piano anymore...
At the time, it was taboo to say anything about it, so no one reported the incident.
54
Today is the last day of the first round... This morning will be opened by...
Number 54, Lech Szymanowski.

The song is prelude 28... From no. 7 to no. 12, six pieces
Nocturne in B major works 62 no. 1, Etude in F major works 10 no. 8, Ab major works 10 no. 10...

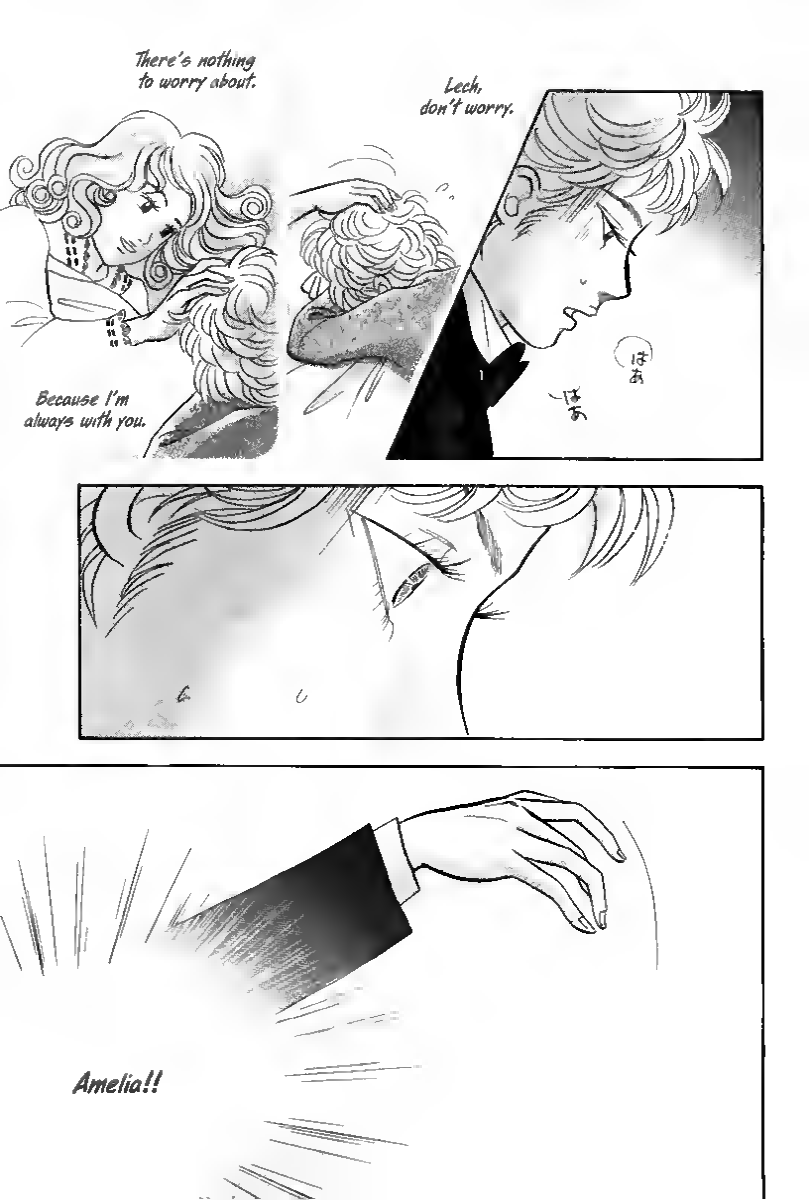

Lech Szymanowski
What?
The piano is a Steinway
Father... Then can I go to school?
Focus, Lech! If you get through this, we'll shorten your practice time by an hour.


Go for it, Lech!
Just focus for 45 minutes!
Poland!
Just get through this round...


54

Amelia...
Amelia...
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
STEINWAY & SONS
Lech!

He looks like Dimitoni Szymanowski's grandson.
Huh?
Just listen for now...
Lech!
Is he alright? He looks a little unstable...
Hey... Don't let me down, Poland....
STEINWAY & SONS


There's nothing to worry about.
Because I'm always with you.
Lech, don't worry.
はあ
はあ
Amelia!!

54

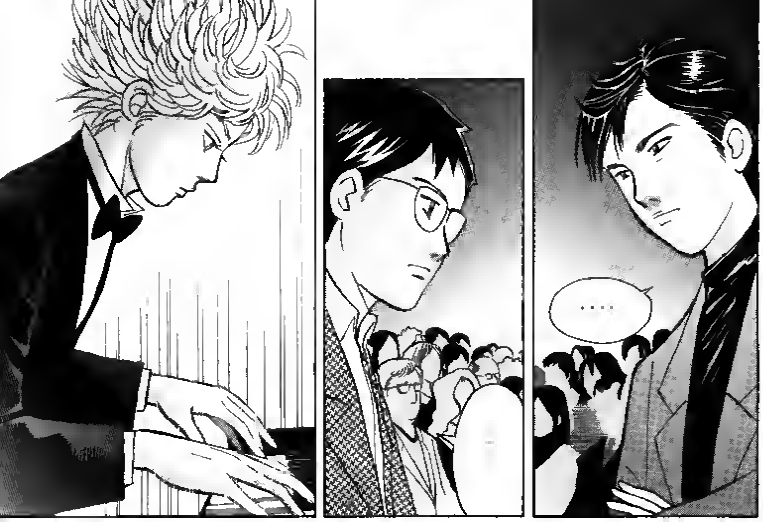
Lech!

No.54,
Lech Szymanowski...

These chords...
What are they...?
It feels like I'm hearing them for the first time again...
How does one describe his playing...?

It sounds soft at first...
But yet... feels as sharp as glass...

It sounds crystal clear, and with such a free rubato... This is basically a cantabile!
His face is so pale....
Yet his technique and articulation are both soft and yet bold...
Such a noble and soothing piece...
Hehe.
Dimitomi Szymanowski's grandson!
It's him....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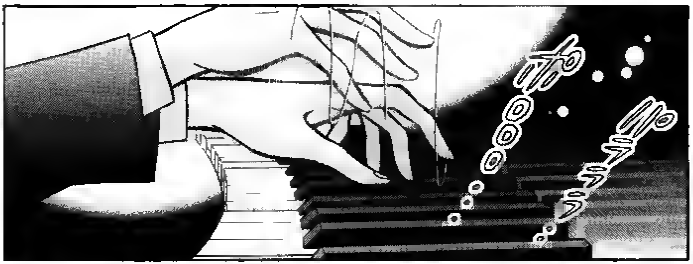
ラララ

New st...
Ne...

This is Poland's new star!!

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PIANO NO MORI

by ISSHIKI Makoto
一色まこと

Piano no Mori ch 133

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Chapter 134

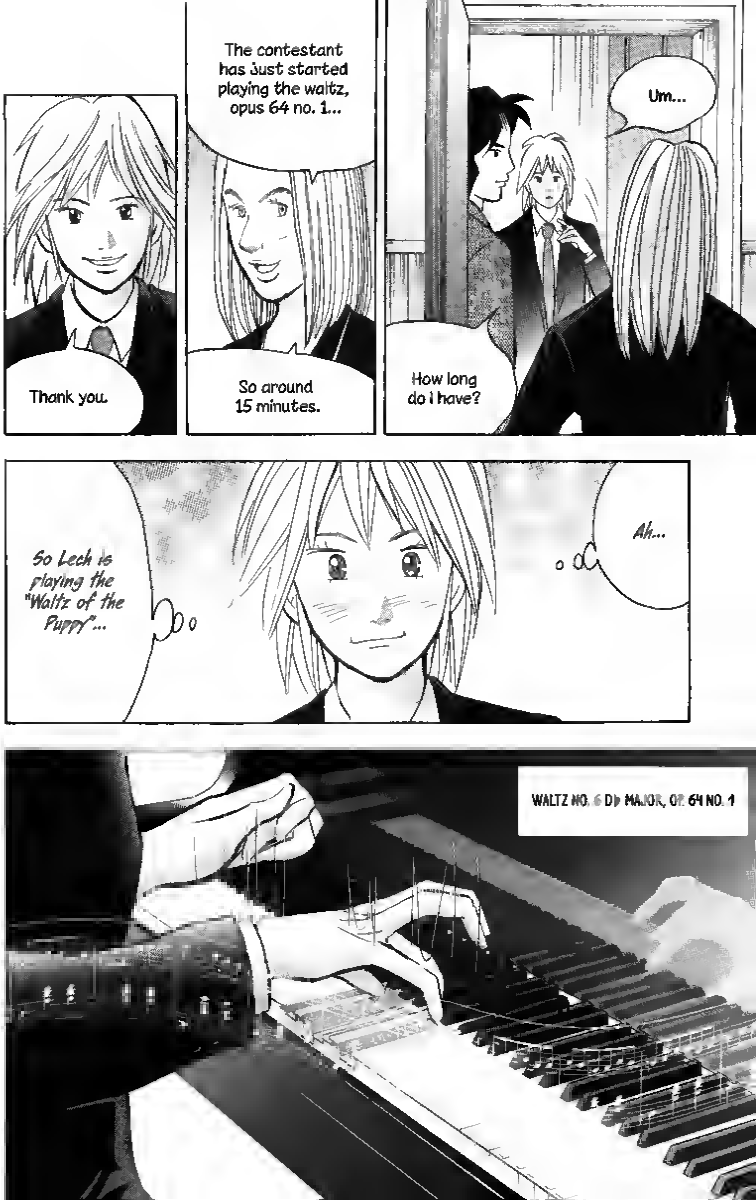
Lech! Lech! Lech!

NOCTURNE NO. 13, B MAJOR, OP. 62 NO. 1
ETUDE F MAJOR, OP. 10 NO. 8
ETUDE A MAJOR DROP,
OP. 10 NO. 10
CHANTEY F MAJOR RISE, OP. 60

Lech!
Good, that's it!
Focus until the very last note!

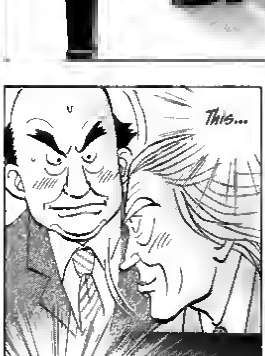
Lech!
ONCERT HALL
コン
コン

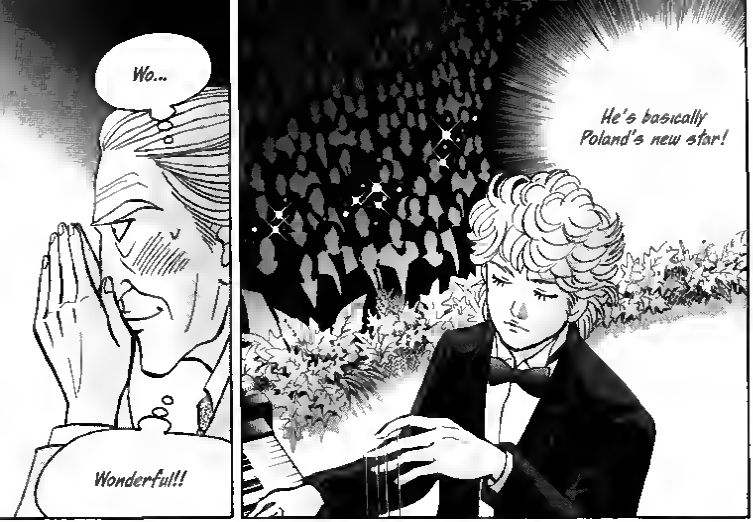
Time to get ready.
Alright.
Or should I just leave you on your own?
Don't do that...
Ichinose Kai.
It's almost time; please get ready.


Um...
How long do I have?
The contestant has just started playing the waltz, opus 64 no. 1...
So around 15 minutes.
Thank you.
Ah...
So Lech is playing the "Waltz of the Puppy"...
WALTZ NO. 6 D♭ MAJOR, OP. 64 NO. 1

WALTZ NO. 7 C♯ MAJOR, OP. 64 NO. 2
Lech Szymanowski played opus' 64 no. 1 to 3 perfectly.
WALTZ NO. 8 A♭ MAJOR, OP. 64 NO. 3

He played that just as magnificently...
Scherzo no. 4 E♯ Major, opus 54...


This...
This boy is amazing!


Wo...
Wonderful!!
He's basically Poland's new star!

They all failed to reach our expectations...
All of Poland's contestant's this year, Pavueu Wagner, Krzysztof Zwier, Joanna Borowska...

But Dimitoni Szymanowski's grandson, whom no one even knew existed...

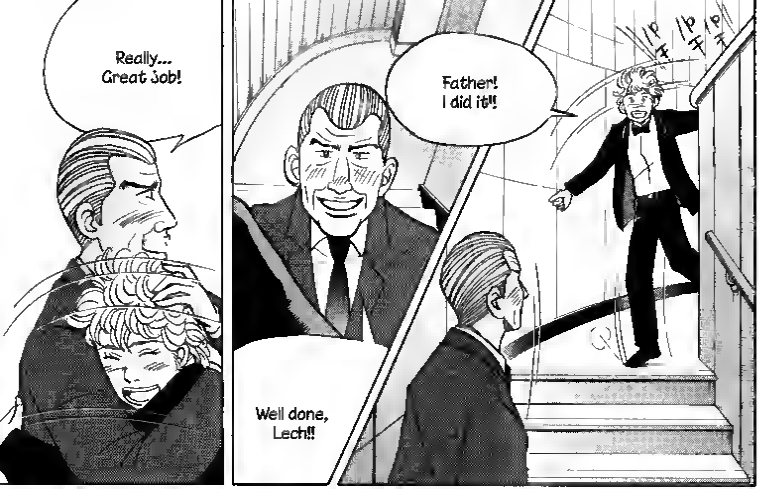
The only one worth remembering was that annoying Karol Adamski...

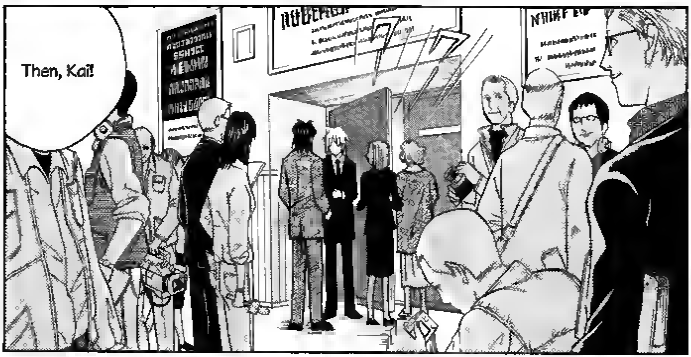
Hey! Are our reporters at the venue on stand-by?
MEDIA ROOM
Ah...
Outstanding! This person hasn't made a single mistake!
Totally perfect...
This unknown boy...
Lech Szymanowski...

If it's him, then it's possible!!
STEINWA
With his piano...

He may just be able to make it to the top!!
54

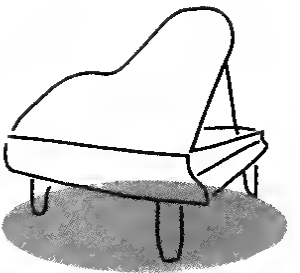
He could be the best we've seen so far...
Magnifi-cent...
Amaz-ing!
Intriguing!"
Yeah.
54
....


Really... Great Job!
Father! I did it!!
Well done, Lech!!


Then, Kai!

Hm?
That's it...?
Sure.
Just play as you normally do.
I'll be watching from the auditor -ium...

Haha...
Your beloved student is taking his first step onto the international stage!
Shouldn't you be more encouraging...?
Just believe in yourself!
Lech! Lech! Lech! END



The Perfect World of KAI

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Piano no Mori ch 134

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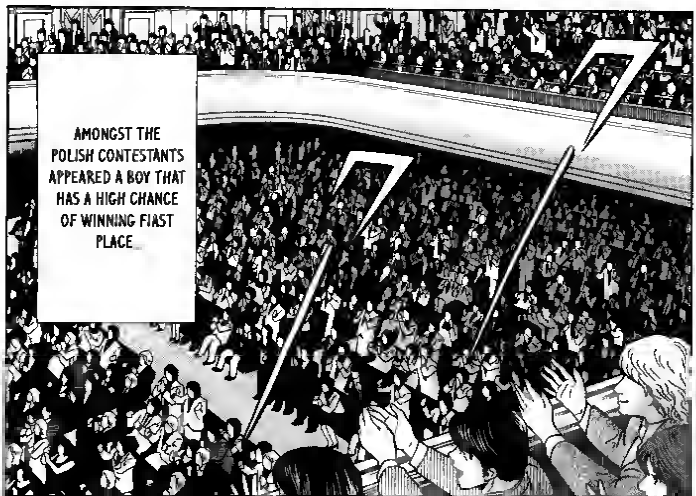
Chapter 135

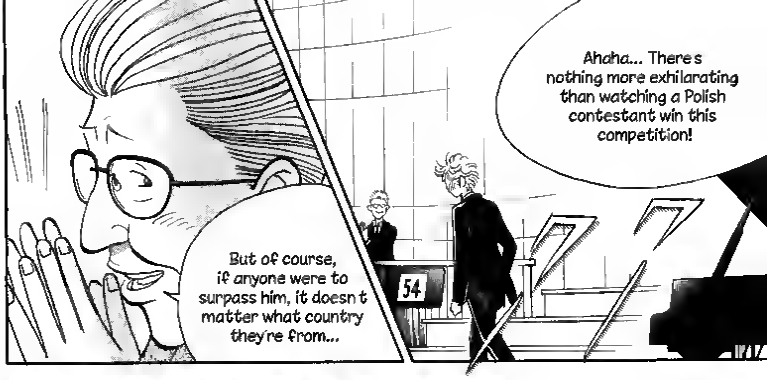
Powodzenia

No.54
Lech Szymanowski.
Poland.


AMONGST THE POLISH CONTESTANTS APPEARED A BOY THAT HAS A HIGH CHANCE OF WINNING FIRST PLACE_

TO THE POLISH JUDGES, IT WAS FANTASTIC NEWS
THE POLISH STAFF...
AND ALL OF THE POLISH AUDIENCE CHEERED LOUDLY FOR HIM.

THAT IS THE BIRTH PLACE OF CHOPIN..
54
POLAND.


Ahaha... There's nothing more exhilarating than watching a Polish contestant win this competition!
But of course, if anyone were to surpass him, it doesn't matter what country they're from...
54

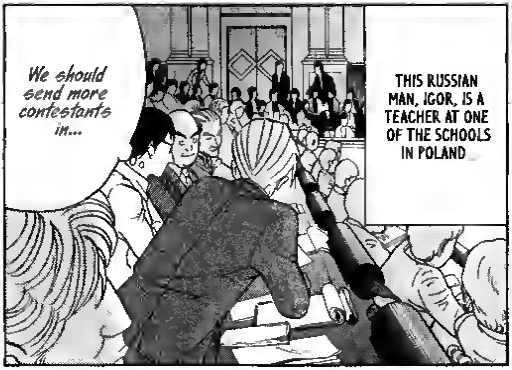
Because, this Chopin Competition is an international, world-class competition after all!
HILARIOUS

Then why are there so many Polish judges on the panel?
If this is indeed such a noble competition...

8 of them are Polish.
WALDEMAR JASIŃSKI. POLAND
Out of the 19 judges...
PIOTR WEBER. POLAND
ANNA BILIŃSKA. POLAND
BEATA-BARBARA POLAŃSKA POLAND
JÓZEF STROIK. POLAND
JAN TURCZYŃSKI. POLAND
THEY'RE JUST BARELY FOLLOWING THE RULE OF HAVING LESS THAN HALF OF THE PANEL BEING FROM THE SAME COUNTRY...
ADAM JASIŃSKI. POLAND (CHAIRMAN OF THE JUDGING PANEL)
ANDRZEJ PAVLAS. POLAND (VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE JUDGING PANEL)

It must be due to his father's teachings.
I'm not so sure.
Ah~ to think the Szymanowski boy would have this level of skill.
It's Dymitr Szymanowski's blessing...
It skipped a generation, is all.
....
If in the finals...
IGOR GUTMANN RUSSIA

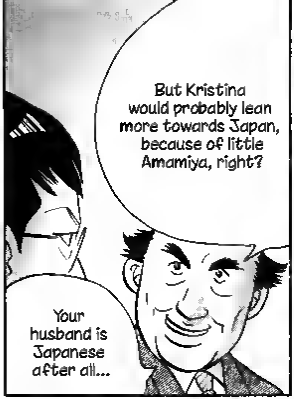
Karol Adamski and Szymanowski have a one-on-one battle...
The whole of Poland would be on fire!


We should send more contestants in...
THIS RUSSIAN MAN, IGOR, IS A TEACHER AT ONE OF THE SCHOOLS IN POLAND

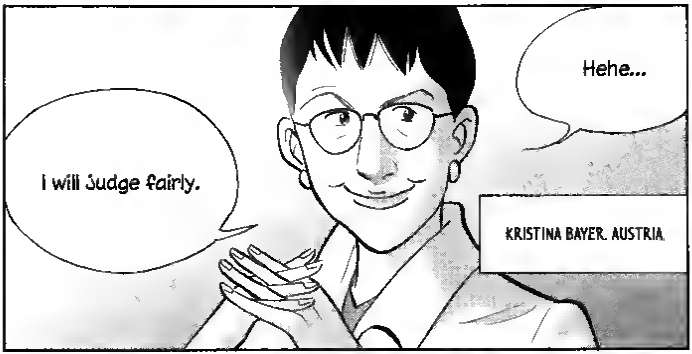
Hehe... True that!

Your country... Austria's Tobias has the skills to make it into the finals...
No. 70, Wolf Tobias.

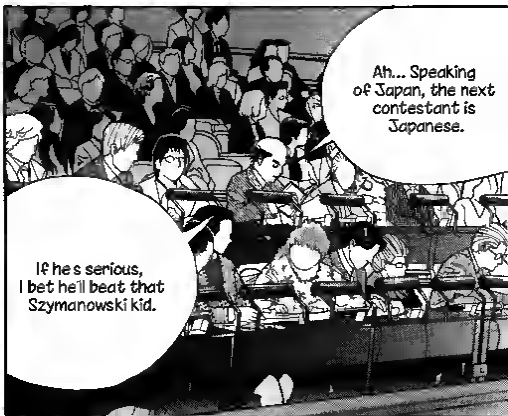
You're not too bad either, Kristina.


But Kristina would probably lean more towards Japan, because of little Amamiya, right?
Your husband is Japanese after all...

All the others barely scraped a passing mark,
but Tobias was really good!


Hehe...
I will judge fairly.
KRISTINA BAYER. AUSTRIA

These foreign judges do not even speak Polish, and yet they won't stop gabbing about Poland...


Ah... Speaking of Japan, the next contestant is Japanese.
If he's serious, I bet he'll beat that Szymanowski kid.

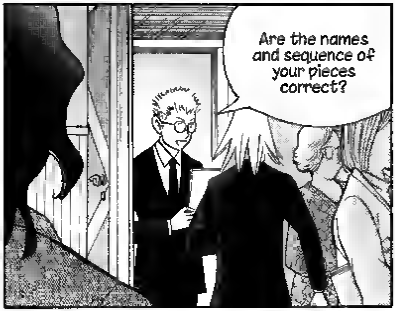
Believe in yourself!

I never expect you to say anything inspirational...
What does that mean?
Haha...
Right?
Just play your own piano...
You...
?
Lend me your hand.
Then, at least...

What's wrong? Kai.
Are you feeling sick?
No.
....
This is for good luck.
Don't worry!
I'm feeling fine!

Yeah, I'll see you later!
You go on ahead.

Ah! Kai Ichinose.
Please review the list...


Are the names and sequence of your pieces correct?

KAI!!!
Yes.

It's your turn, Kai!
Yeah.
Lech!
Powodzenia!
(Polish for good luck)
Thanks!
37

Lech Szymanowski, could we have a word?
I'm sorry, my son...
Lech?
Friend?
I'm sorry, father!
My friend's performing next!

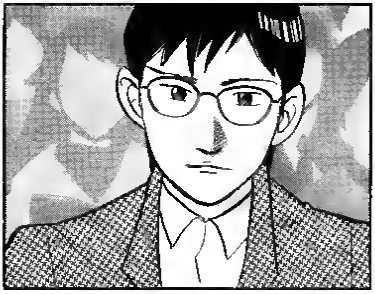
Excuse me!
Coming through!
37
I....
I made it.

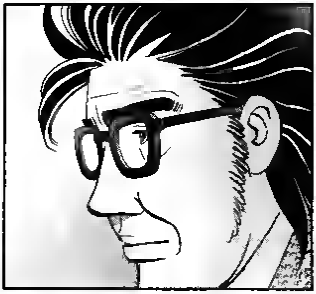
The second contestant of the morning section is...

No.37
Kai Ichinose,
37
Playing...

Etude in C major
Op.10 No.1,
Etude in A minor
Op.10 No.2,
Nocturne No.3
in B major
Op.9 No.3,

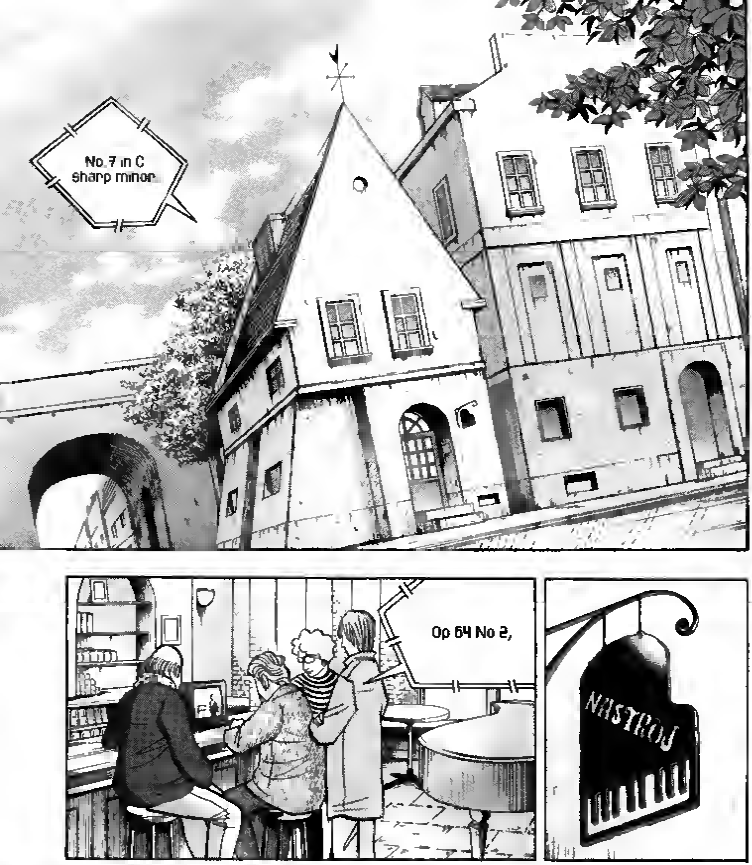
Waltzes No.8
in A flat major...
Op 64 No 3,





Kai...

Finally...


No.7 in C sharp minor

Op.64 No.2,

NASTROJ

No.6 in D flat major..
37
Op.64 No.1,

Ballade no 4...
in F minor
Op.52,
Preludes
Op 28 No 12,

No.13 to No.24
The piano is
Steinway
I'm not nervous at all, Ajino.

Because up till now...
Kai Ichinose.
Japan.

Powodzenia END

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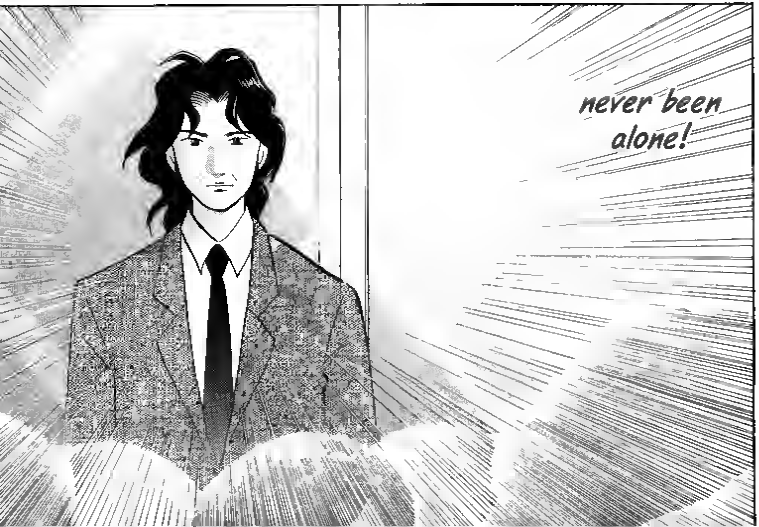
up till now...
I have...


never been alone!

Chapter 136

Expectations

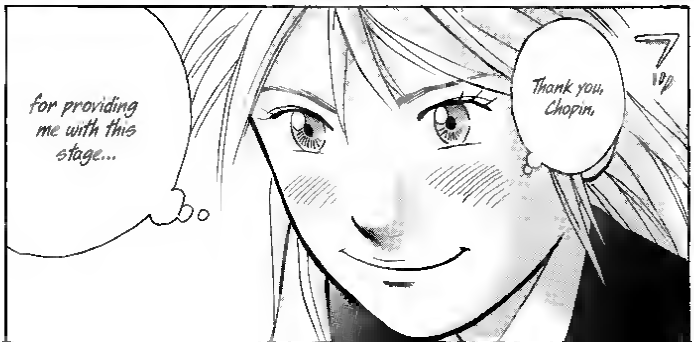
STEINWA
Kai...
Do you know...

for this moment...
How long I've waited....
STEINWAY & SONS
?
Just play it as you normally would!
It's alright! It's alright!

STEINWAY & SONS

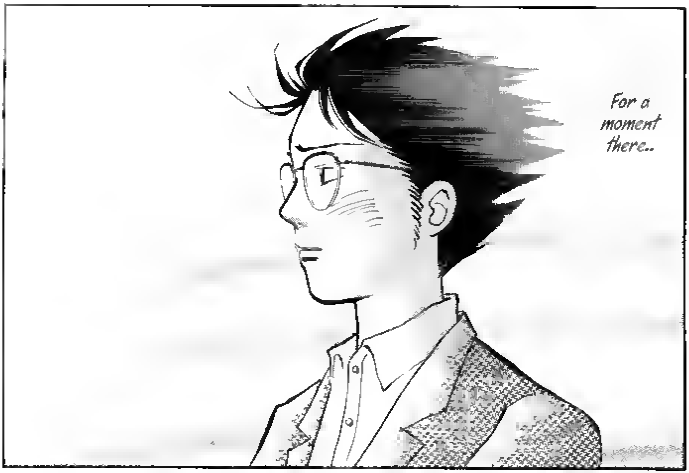
Hi! Chopin...
I'm finally here.

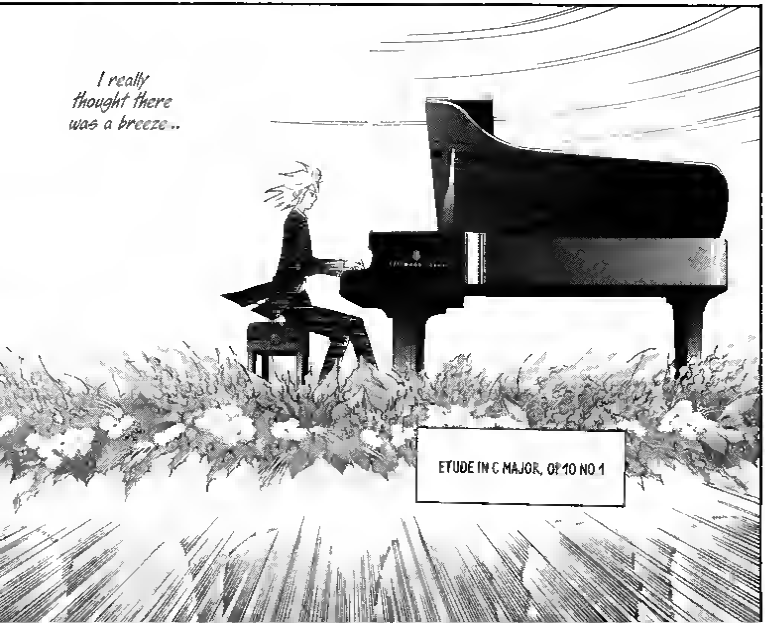
Shopping's so cool!!
Chopin
Shopping?
It's pronounced as Chopin.
Shopping, shopping, shopping~


Thank you, Chopin,
for providing me with this stage...

Haha...
It looks like the moon...

....
Good..
He seems calm...


For a moment there..


I really thought there was a breeze..
ETUDE IN C MAJOR, OP.10 NO.1

is growing stronger.
Slowly...
The atmosphere in the room...
Calming...
Ah... Such...
Ah..
Just now..
Was there a breeze?

It feels like...
being rejuvenated...
What a beautiful sound.
This rush of adrenaline..
It's making me, who has grown tired of Chopin...
His music...
No... It's making the whole room...
It's making those who are no longer touched by Chopin.

Awaken to
something
amazing.

This is not Ajino's piano...
Wh..
What is this...
ストン
You...
Aren't you here to revive Ajino's magnificent piano?!

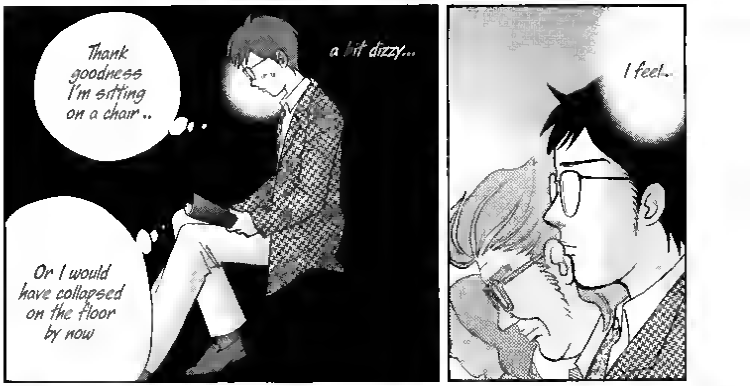
Who is this boy?!
He plays so quickly and so powerfully right from the beginning..
No.37, Kai... Ichinose...
I heard he barely made it through the preliminaries...
Wh..
What is this..
But the biggest challenge of this piece is the fatigue it causes one's wrists...
Can he finish the entire piece with such precision?
Can you make it to the end?

In...
Incredible...
There hasn't been a single mistake! And he shows no sign of faltering yet!

.....!!
This.... This is....
Eh?!
ETUDE A MINOR,
OP10 NO 2

THERE WAS NO PAUSE...
HE WENT STRAIGHT INTO OP.10 NO.2!!

.....
Amazing.. I'm getting goosebumps
A.. Amazing...
Aren't his wrists tired?


Thank goodness I'm sitting on a chair..
a bit dizzy...
Or I would have collapsed on the floor by now
I feel..

It's different from other pianos...
Ah.. Such beautiful music..
What is this sound..?
Ah... Was there another breeze just now?
Haha... Kai...
I know...
This... is the piano in the forest!
Kai...
But I know!
Even if no one here can tell...

Expectations END

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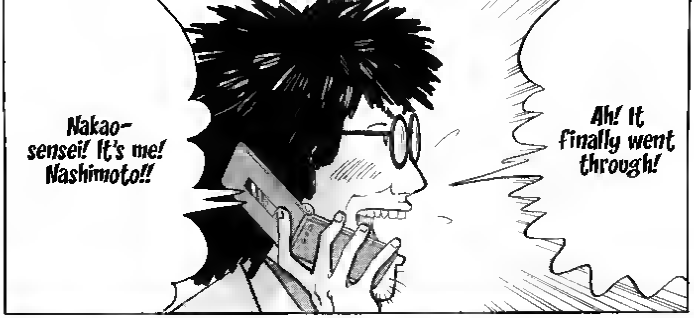
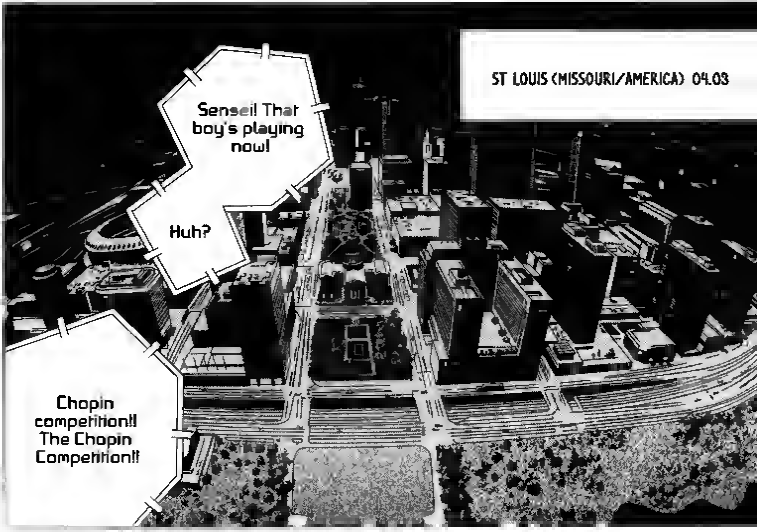
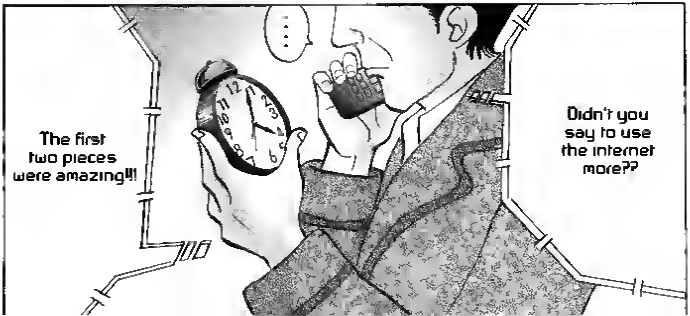
WARSAW (POLAND). 11:03
TOKYO 18 03.
東京山手医大附属病院
HELLO?
HELLO?
HELLO?!


Nakao-sensei! It's me! Nashimoto!!
Ah! It finally went through!


ST LOUIS (MISSOURI/AMERICA) 04.03
Sensei! That boy's playing now!
Huh?
Chopin competition!! The Chopin Competition!!


The first two pieces were amazing!!!
Didn't you say to use the internet more??

Nashimoto... What time is it in Japan?
Eh? Around six in the evening...
It's 4 in the morning over here...
Who gave my emergency phone number to this guy...
Ah !!!!
Th... The next piece is starting, I have to hang up!!
Sensei! The next one is a Nocturne!! Nocturne No.3!!

Chapter 137

The waltz that couldn't be played

NOCTURNE NO 3 IN B MAJOR, OP9 NO 3
Compared to Kai's earlier Etudes...
This gives the whole room a new atmosphere...

They are listening to Kai's music...
Everyone's...
holding their breath...
Everyone here has already had their senses...
completely immersed in Kai's piano...
In only 3 and a half minutes...
No... Even earlier than that...
with such concentration...
It keeps them so focused!
either in a competition or a concert.
Until now...
I have never heard a Nocturne...
that makes the audience so on edge...

Right now, everybody is concentrating on Kai...
So as not to miss a beat, or leave out a single note...
that Kai is playing at this moment...
They are drinking in everything.
That...
That's it. That's how it is.
This is the kind of piano that makes people beg for more once they've heard it.
This is...
This...

This is just like listening to Ajino Sousuke's piano...

A...Amazing...
The hesitant phrases are simply exquisite...
Exquisite as in... feminine?
That's what I thought, but the scale at the end is surprisingly firm and resolute...
This...

STEINWAY & SONS

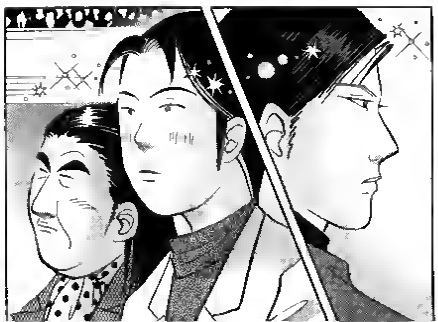
A journey of Chopin!!
This is indeed...

ほう...

Next are the waltzes.
swept away... all the tension in just an instance...
Kai...
All their attention is focused on Kai...
Even the audience's breathing has slowed...
WALTZ NO 8 IN A FLAT MAJOR, OP.64 NO.3

He's playing the three pieces in reverse order?
Szymanowski played them in the regular order just now...
It's a coincidence.. But they end up choosing the same pieces... Intereesting.

WALTZ NO.7 IN C SHARP MINOR,
OP.64 NO.2

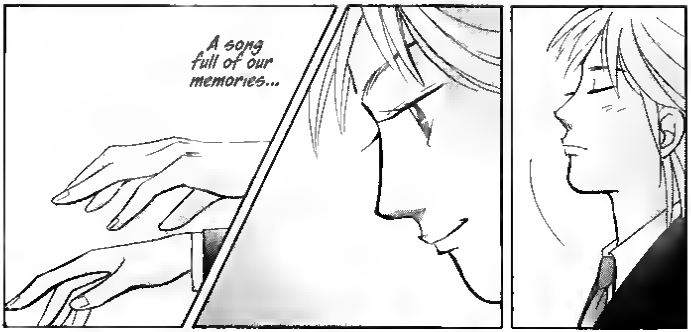


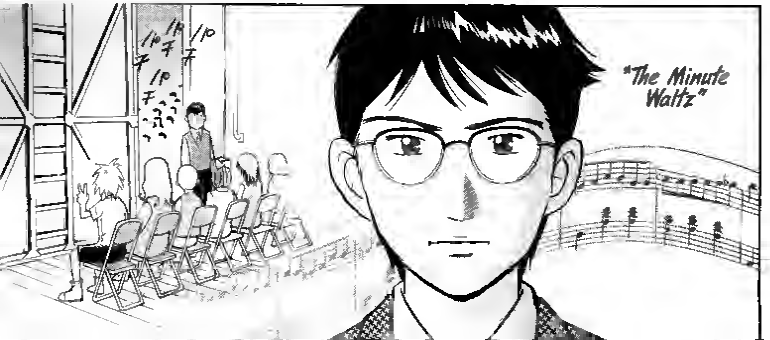
are Ajino and me...
who can listen to Kai's music in a relaxed manner...

Haha...
I bet the only ones in this room...

And then...
STEINWAY

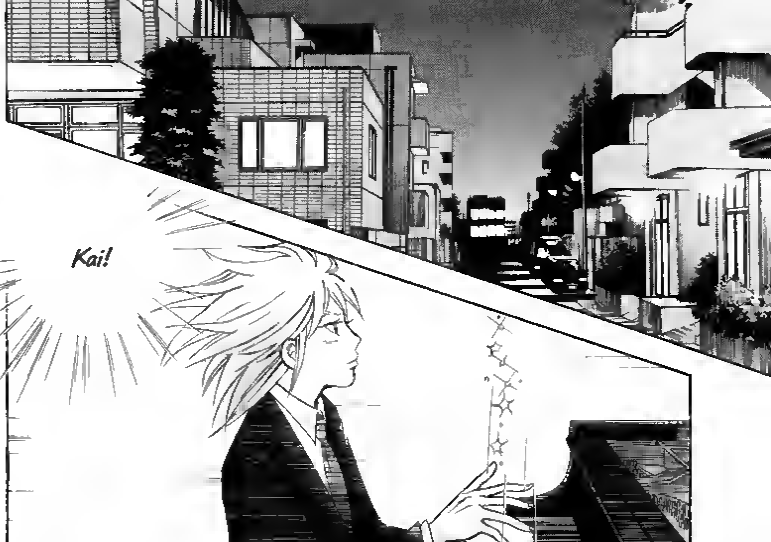
Kai's...
final waltz is Op.64 No.1...


A song full of our memories...


"The Minute Waltz"

Preliminary rounds (middle scho
Amamiya Shuhei
back when we were in elementary Year 5...
This was the set piece of the National Students' Piano Contest that we participated in...
Promise me, Amamiya! Win the regional final... and get into the national final...
And then, you have to become Number One in Japan!
I played that song at a competition with no worthy opponents...
because you weren't there.

Kai...
If it were you...
How would you have played Chopin's waltz?
It'd most definitely be beyond perfection!!

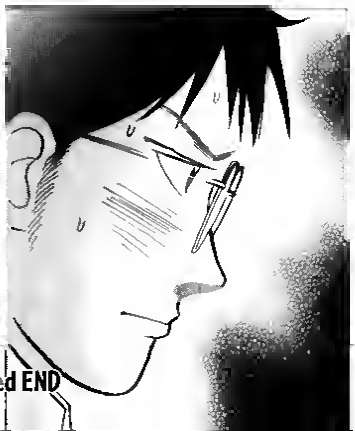

Kai!

At that time,
I was such a kid...
Do you
remember?
When
was it...

I went to the competition in which the judges had rejected you...
I wanted to avenge you...
So I deliberately wrecked the song.

That was so silly of me...
But Kai...
Why...?
You can still play such a magnificent "Minute Waltz".
Even if I hadn't done that for you...

It's not the level of skill... Nor is it my personal preferences...
Why is Kai's piano different?
What exactly...
makes it so different from others' piano...



The waltz that couldn't be played END

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PIANO NO MORI

by ISSHIKI Makoto
一色まこと

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Piano no Mori ch 137

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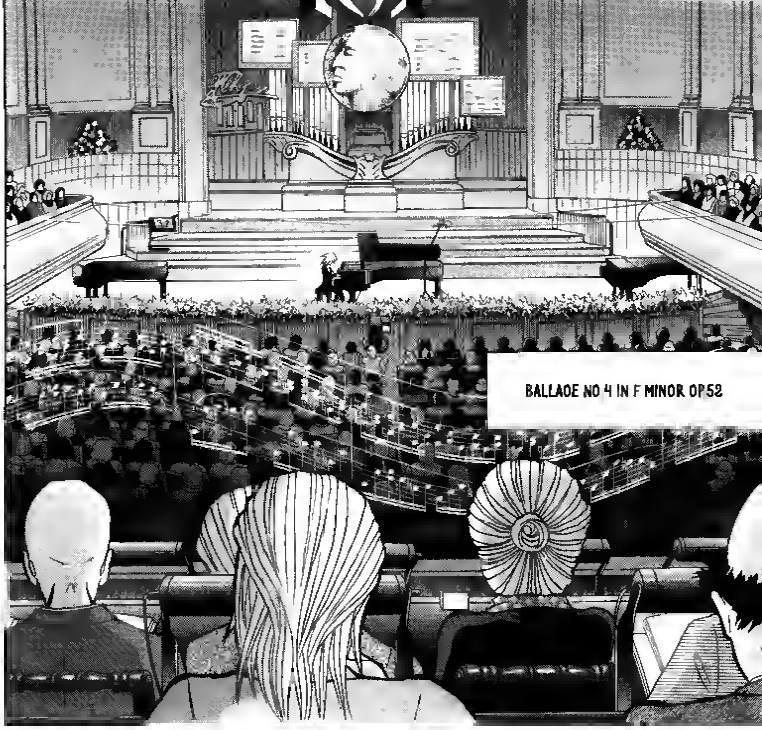
How much harder do I need to work?
Why?!
I still won't be able to beat Kai.
Looks like...
What else... do I have to sacrifice?!!

The next piece is Ballade No.4.
Are you alright?
Worthy...? Huh...
I'm just... think he is a worthy enemy... That's all.
I'm OK... Just... shaking with excitement.
I can't even glean his full strength...
Right now...

Chapter 138 The Difference in Interpretation

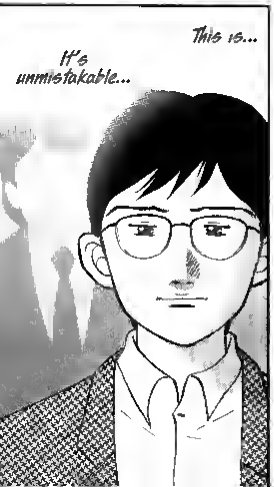

BALLADE NO 4 IN F MINOR OP52

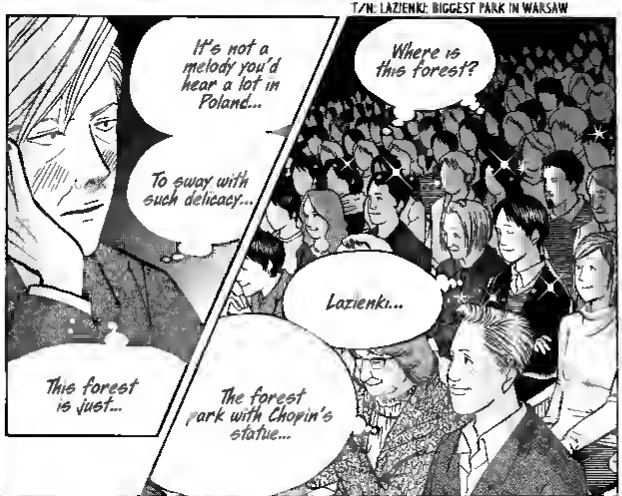
It feels so...
so serene.

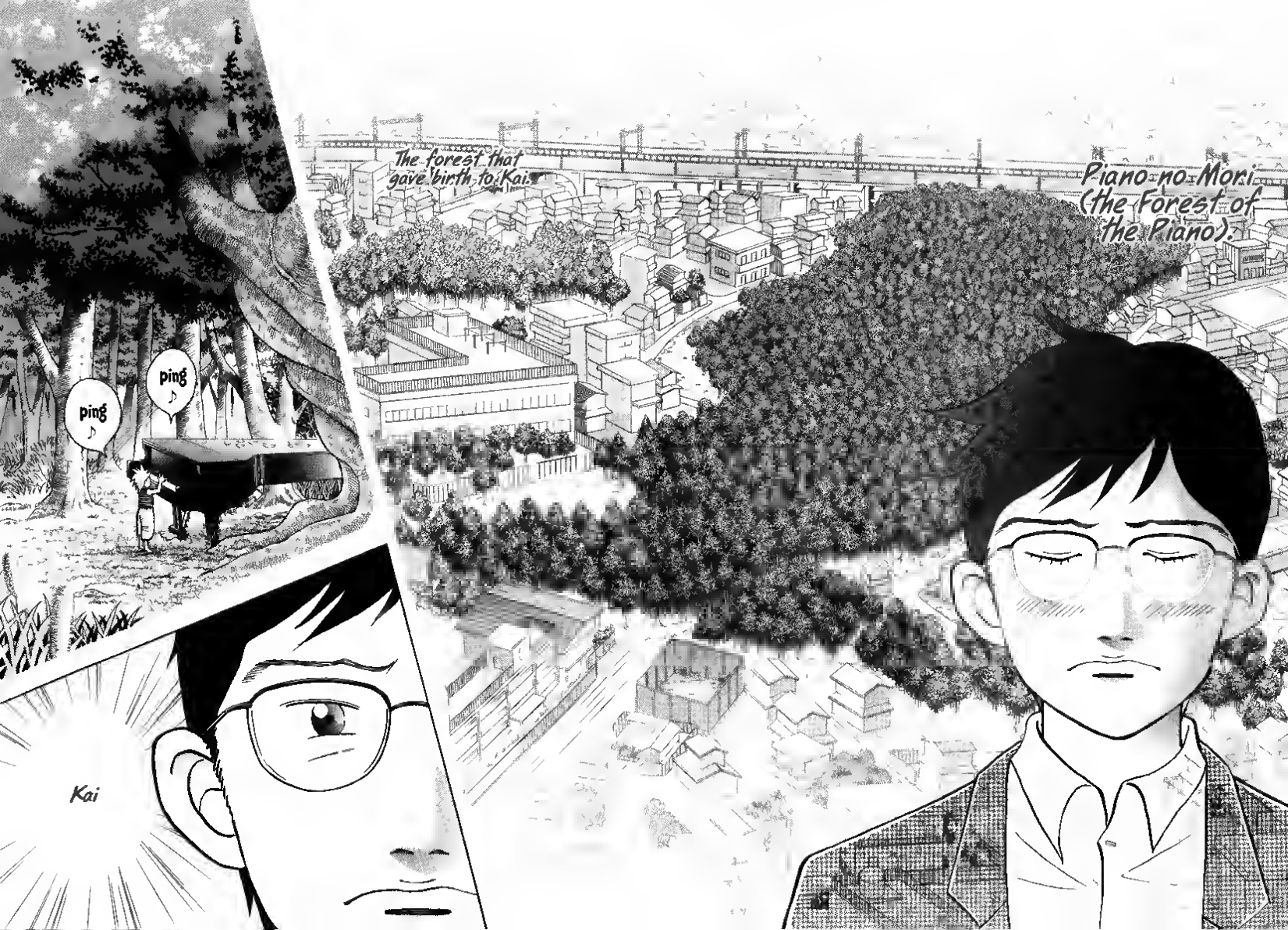
This intro...

Where could this be?
A lake?...
I can feel the wind blowing.
Water...
No... The wind?
I wonder where this lake is?
There's a thick wall of trees surrounding it.
No, it's the sea...
!
... A forest...
No, that's not it.
What place is this?

T/N: LAZIENKI: BIGGEST PARK IN WARSAW




It's not a melody you'd hear a lot in Poland...
To sway with such delicacy...
This forest is just...
Where is this forest?
Lazienki...
The forest park with Chopin's statue...


ping ♪
ping ♪
Kai
The forest that gave birth to Kai.
Piano no Mori (The Forest of the Piano).

Yet, you seem to have gained something in return?!
You were forced to live in that place where you were scorned and looked down on by people...
You...
were born... and raised in such harsh conditions...
in the darkest part of this blessed country.
Amamiya!!
You...
Kai.

The power to lead all of your audience into the forest?
Is it perhaps...

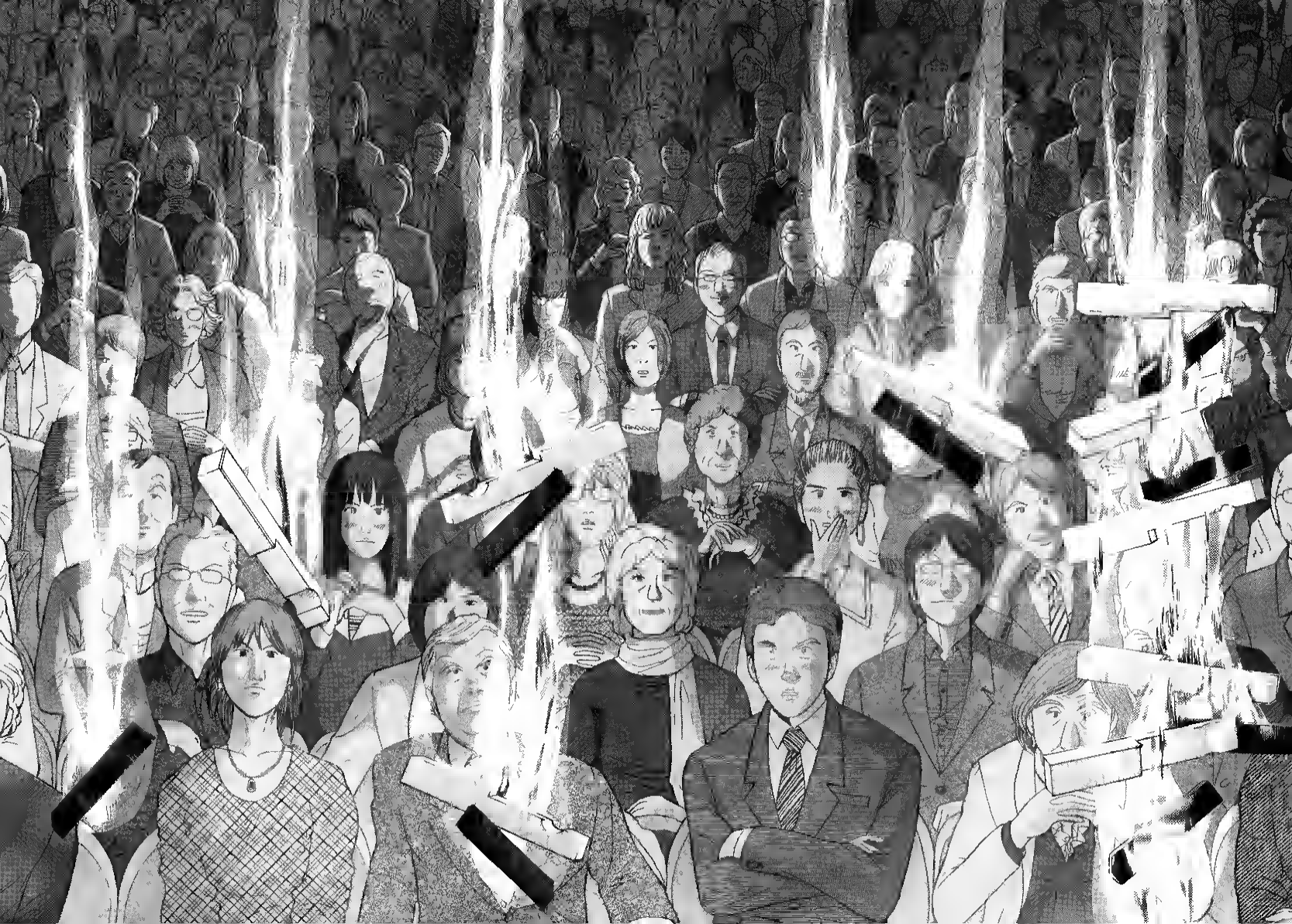
Kai Ichinose...
Just what in the world are you?!

I'm getting goosebumps...
Just where could he have acquired such persuasiveness?
Ahh... This build-up...
It's so dramatic!!!
One really finds himself in the Forest of the Piano whenever Kai plays Ballade No.4, don't you agree?
NASTROJ
Sousuke...
Ha ha... Don't say that. Just go along with him.
His coercive playing would still drag us back to the forest.
But no matter what,
He obviously plays all the songs differently...
And it's not just this song...

Yes.
Besides, I suspect his take on Ballade No.4 after the build-up will be quite different from the normal interpretation of the Polish people...
I had thought about having him change his interpretation right before the competition.
But I decided not to force him and let him keep playing as he sees fit.
Then that part will definitely appear, won't it?
The part where he lost his piano.
It was an unforget-table event ta Kai.
Indeed.
It's not that I can't forget it,

Just as Sensei once said...
Nor should I ever let it go!!
Rather, I must not forget it.
The piano in the forest has always been with me.
From that day onward... From that moment onward...
Ever since that time...
"My piano"...
Because no matter what, it will always be my piano!

has always
been within me...

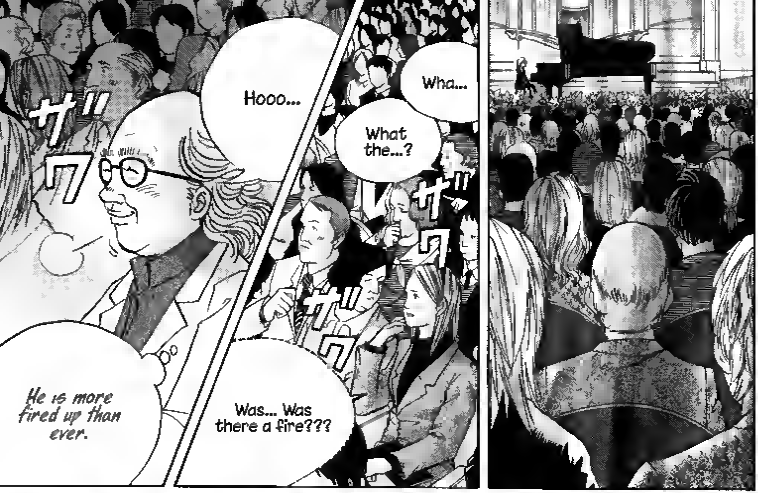


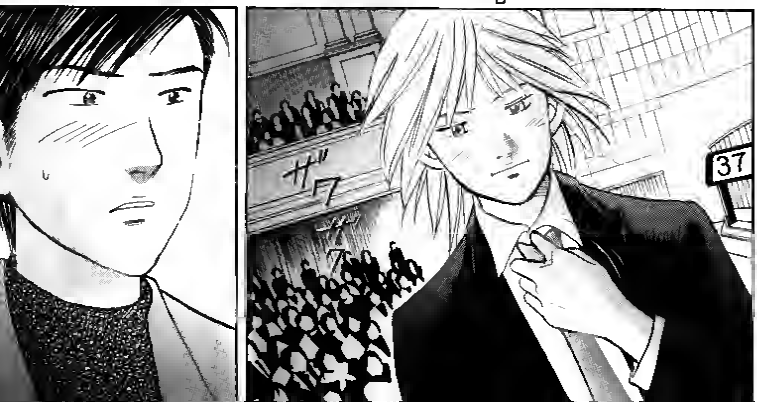
Wha...
What...

What is this?!
This interpretation is no longer our Chopin's.

Definitely not!!
E...
But even so...
Even though it's different...

It's
magnificent!!


Hooo...
Wha...
What, the...?
He is more fired up than ever.
Was... Was there a fire???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Thus, in the midst of such commotion within and without the auditorium...
Kai moved onto the twelve Preludes.
ザワ
ザワ
Visual of the venue was lost.
At the same time, the Internet connection also crashed.
Coincidentally, the broadcasting signal malfunctioned throughout Poland in that instance...
These pieces are the perfect testimony of the careful nurture Sousuke has put into Kai!
The Difference in Interpretation: END

『Piano no Mori』 Music Terminology Notes

CHAPTER 133
ARTICULATION

→The clarity or disparity of sound
For the piano, it is to make each note
stand out, or to soften your touch so as
to differentiate between the notes

RUBATO

→Means "stolen" in Italian.
It is hard to express feelings with just notes.
You would also need to slightly alter the tempo
depending on your emotions. Quicken the pace a bit
(stealing tempo), and then slow down again
(returning the tempo). Hence the name.

CANTABILE

→As if one were singing
Not dull at all. Instead, it is a really exciting performance
where one plays like they were singing their heart out

NOBLE

→In a noble fashion
In music, it refers to performances that are not rustic
or rough, where the instrument(s) are properly played.

CHAPTER 137
SCALE

→Musical scale
Musical scale = the very basis of a piano performance
The determining factor of the quality of a performance,
as well as the impression it leaves.

The Perfect World of KAI

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